WORLD SOCCER

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The INTERNATIONAL Magazine

EUROPEAN CUP QUARTER FINALS:

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Club Focus: ESPAÑOL . . . and why FRANK RIJKAARD won't be there

Plus
African Nations Cup Preview
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WORLD SOCCER

THE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE

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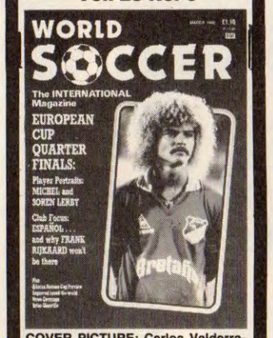

COVER PICTURE: Carlos Valderrama, Colombia's South American Footballer of the Year. Back cover: Lothar Matthaus (Bayern Munich and West Germany). Back cover in the January issue was Marco Van Basten (Holland) and back cover in the February edition was Rui Barros (FC Porto).

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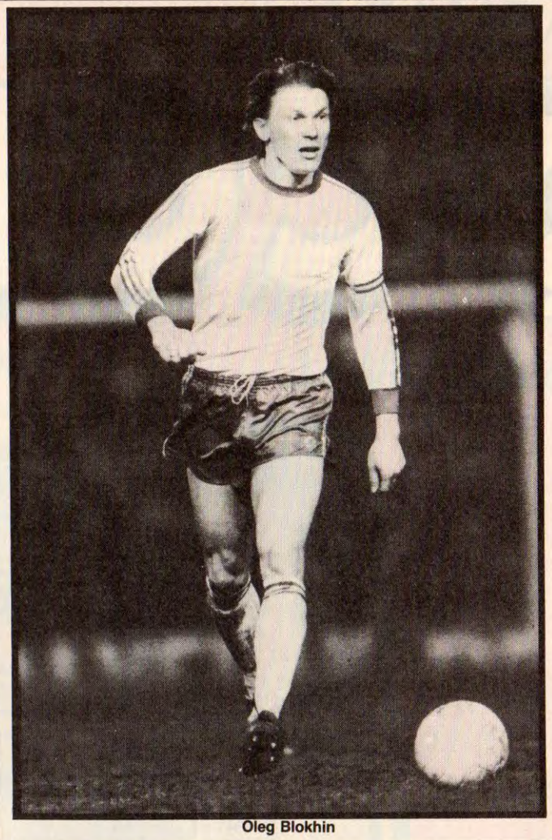
Oleg Blokhin

FRENCH FIFA FINAL FOLLY

JACQUES CHIRAC, French Prime Minister and state presidential candidate next month, has thrown a huge spanner into French hopes of staging the finals of the 1998 World Cup.

Chirac's claim that he had already "come to an arrangement " with FIFA president Joao Havelange has infuriated officials of both FIFA and of the Swiss federation — rival front-runners with the French to stage the 1998 event.

At an election rally in Dijon, Chirac told 5,000 cheering supporters:" I have negotiated with president Havelange and we will have the World Cup in 1998.

"Already I have foreseen the investment needed for an appropriate new stadium in Paris. It will be an ecologistic stadium which will surprise people — a stadium which will bring the dimension necessary as the venue for a World Cup such as no-one has ever seen."

A new national stadium is a prerequisite for a French World Cup bid. The Parc des Princes in Paris, though completed only in 1973, has a maximum capacity of only 50,000, much too small to serve as focal point for the finals.

Jean Fournet-Fayard, president of the French federation, gave a cautious welcome to Chirac's sudden enthusiasm for the World Cup and a new stadium.

He warned: "No-one can prejudge the outcome of the hosting decision right now, even if president Havelange has repeated several times that he would consider favourably a French candidacy."

FIFA spokesman Guido Tognoni — Havelange being out of reach in South America — pulled no punches. Tognoni said: " FIFA has not yet given approval to anyone to stage the 1998 World Cup. There must have been some misunderstanding.

"Chirac talked with Dr Havelange some time ago (when Paris was a rival to Barcelona for the 1992 Olympic Games) and the FIFA president encouraged him to make a bid for 1998. "That is not the same as a promise. No decision is likely before at least 1992."

Hours later Chirac tried to pull back from the brink, saying: "President Havelange encouraged an application from France and said it would be examined with a particular interest. The contacts I have had with those who will make the decision leave me with the impression that France is well placed. will do everything in my power to help. And the new stadium will be built whether France stages the World Cup or not."

The French candidacy has suffered a serious blow with Chirac's intervention, which has apparently compromised FIFA's impartial stance on such an issue. That will make it harder, not easier, for Fournet-Fayard and his officials to win the day.

SWISS courts in Zurich and Sarnen have, predictably, dismissed applications sought by Rolf Deyhle, the Sport Billy entrepreneur, against FIFA and its Luzern-based marketing agents, ISL. Deyhle is upset that FIFA will not be renewing the Sport Billy commercial contract which expires in 1990.

LIVERPOOL, unbeaten leaders of the Football League after 26 matches, are on course to become the first English club to complete a second Cup and championship double.

Liverpool won both the FA Cup and the league title in 1986 and the odds against them repeating the feat this year have been tumbling steadily.

Everton, the only team to have beaten Liverpool this season — in the Littlewoods Cup — could not provide an encore in the big Merseyside derby for a place in the quarters finals of the FA Cup.

A headed goal from Ray Houghton, after a superb piece of combination work by Peter Beardsley and John Barnes, gave Liverpool sweet revenge at Goodison Park.

It was the latest in a succession of brilliant goals scored by Kenny Dalglish's team which should help to silence some of those pundits who suggest that the current Liverpool squad is in some way inferior to other great Anfield sides.

But while Liverpool's performances represent the more acceptable face of English football, violence on and off the field does nothing to enhance or accelerate the chances of a return to European competition.

Shrewsbury police were reported to be considering a charge against Chris Kamara of Swindon following an incident with Shrewsbury City's Jim Melrose.

Melrose sustained a triple break of the cheekbone after being punched as he left the field following Shrewsbury's match with Swindon.

Gordon Taylor, Chairman of the Players Union, warns: "When players are on the field of play they are not above the law of the land."

Brazilian star Mirandinha was involved in an unsavoury incident after Wimbledon had knocked Newcastle out of the FA Cup at St James Park.

His attack on Dons goalkeeper Dave Beasant secured another batch of the sort of headlines English soccer can well do without at a time when European federations are being solicited for their views on lifting the ban imposed after the Heysel tragedy.

A member of the World Soccer staff — for his sins an avid Scunthorpe United fan — was one of seven visiting supporters set upon by a group of Rochdale thugs following a visit to Spotland.

A local policeman, when asked to assist, simply said: "What do you expect when you go to away matches?"

If a small band of Scunthorpe fans, who had travelled from London to Lancashire, cannot leave a ground like Rochdale in peace what chance is there of a cure to a disease that is eating into the very heart of British soccer?

SOVIET SETBACK

by KEIR RADNEDGE

SOVIET European title ambitions have been dealt two major setbacks.

One was the 4-1 defeat by Italy in a warm-up in Bari. But already morale among the squad had collapsed after the latest controversy over 35-year-old Oleg Blokhin — even though he does not figure in manager Valeri Lobanovsky's assault on the European Championship, beginning with the first round group involving England, Holland and the Irish Republic.

Ever since 1982 Blokhin has been led to believe that he was on the verge of being allowed a lucrative transfer abroad.

Blokhin could have been under no illusions that he would have to follow the example set by Anatoly Sinchenko at Rapid Vienna: he would be carefully 'controlled' by family ties back home and by financial controls exerted from Moscow.

But he was ready to except the challenge.

Then came trouble. The Soviets disappointed at the 1982 World Cup finals under a manager, in Konstantin Beskov, who had little sympathy with Blokhin's ambition. There was no secret about the 'cold war' existing between them. When the Soviets fell in 'only' the second round his transfer prospects vanished.

At one stage Ramon Mendoza, now president of Real Madrid who built up a millionaire trading empire as middle-man between Spain and the Soviet Union, was involved in unofficial talks about Blokhin moving to Spain. But as Blokhin grew older, so his value grew less and talks faded away.

Two years ago I asked Boris Topornin, president of the Soviet federation, whether any players would be allowed out. He told me: "Our view is this: while players are young and at their peak we need them in our teams. When they are past their best then I suppose there might be some discussion. But really they then will be equally valuable in helping our new players."

A qualified "Nyet".

Then, along came glasnost and a chink of light. Last spring Blokhin was offered a consolation of a loan to Ujpest Dozsa in Hungary, the most affluent of the Eastern Block countries. Blokhin was not interested. Indeed, he soon let it be known among his Kiev team-mates that he intended to retire at the end of the year.

Other players were, however, on the move. Five fringe internationals, all veterans, were named as open to offers. There were a few takers. Sergi Shavlo was soon the subject of negotiations with Rapid Vienna; then Yuri Gavrilov with a couple of Finnish clubs.

Blokhin did not figure on the list. Nor had he changed his mind about retiring. In a magazine interview team-mate Vadim Yevtushenko said: "Blokhin is certainly retiring at the end of the season. He is tired of all the rows with Lobanovsky and the other officials."

Then, at the start of December, national team goalkeeper Rinat Dassayev lifted the lid. On a close season trip to West Germany, with Spartak, Dassayev said: "Next summer, after the European championships, the Soviet authorities will allow players who are 28 or over, to transfer to the west. For myself I can say I would be happy to play in Italy or France or England . . ."

So that was the carrot: success in the European championship in exchange for an exit visa.

One month later and the new approach appeared to be confirmed when Kiev, in Austria on a winter break tour, negotiated the transfer of Blokhin — at last! — to the Austrian second division club, Vorwarts Steyr. On January 28 Vorwarts officials said they had been told that confirmation of the transfer was imminent. On February 19 officials of the club and their furniture company sponsors were told it was all off.

Blokhin had fallen victim to a political storm over the introduction of 'real' professionalism. Dnepr and Kiev had led the way in preparing to switch their economies away from subsidies and onto a pay-as-you-go basis with income from ticket sales and souvenirs.

Dnepr's application to the central sports council was approved. But Kiev did not even get that far. Their proposals were rebuffed by the national council of the Dynamo sports federation, to which all Dynamo (police) clubs belong. The reasons are obvious. The likes of Kiev, Minsk and Moscow Dynamos bring in the sort of revenue which underpins the structure. Take those clubs away — and Minsk and Moscow would want to follow suit if Kiev went independent — and the structure might collapse.

Thus, with Kiev's managerial and administrative independence on ice, Blokhin was frozen out again.

Now Igor Belanov, Alexander Zavarov and the rest all understand that if Blokhin, ageing, argumentative and way past his best, is not being allowed to leave nor will they. The prospect of a summer transfer as reward for European title success is as far away as ever.

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America bid for World Cup

THE UNITED STATES are about to embark on the last high-profile stage of their bid to beat Brazil and Morocco for the right to stage the 1994 World Cup Finals.

The Marlboro Cup series — four four-team tournaments being staged in Miami, San Antonio, Los Angeles and New York — begins in Miami on March 4 and 6.

Stage is the Joe Robbie Stadium, one of the Americans' projected World Cup venues. Competing against the US national team will be Colo-Colo of Chile and the Colombian clubs, Millionarios and Nacional Medellin.

Last year Millionarios, Colombian champions, beat the United States in the final. This time they meet in the first semi-final.

The second Marlboro Cup event, in San Antonio, Texas on April 6 and 8, features Mexico's UNAM and Universidad de Guadalajara, Alianza of El Salvador and Fort Lauderdale. Details of the other events, set for Los Angeles and New York in August, are still being negotiated. Much of the steam behind them will evaporate if FIFA does not vote for the United States on June 30 when the executive makes its decision on 1994.

Further encouragement for the Americans come both from Brazil and from FIFA president Joao Havelange.

Commenting on the Brazillian CBF's application document, Havelange said: "It is sad. I was upset to find out that the CBF had not done everything necessary to recommend itself as organisers of an event such as a World Cup.

"I much regret this; as a Brazilian I would be pleased if the World Cup were to be held in my country."

The Brazilians then followed up with another administrative own goal over their controversial national championship.

The CBF had decreed that the champions from the rebel big clubs' division (Flamengo) should play the line-toeing 'second division' winners for the overall title. Flamengo refused and appeared secure when the 'second division' title play-off, between Sport Recife and Guarani was halted in confusion with the teams 11-11 in a penalty shoot-out.

The CBF responded by ordering an ad hoc mini-league featuring the TWO finalists from both divisions: Sport and Guarani against Flamengo and Internacional, whom Flamengo had beaten in the 'real' final. Flamengo again refused; so did Internacional. Sport then beat Guarani to be proclaimed official national champions. To add insult to financial injury for Flamengo and Internacional, it is Sport and Guarani who go into the Libertadores Cup.

Sport and Guarani were delighted.

MICHEL W
FOR HIS REV

LESS THAN a year ago Real Madrid and Bayern Munich provided a European Cup semi-final which plumbed the depths instead of hitting the heights. Expulsions and terrace violence scarred the game. Now these two European giants meet again. And one key man, Madrid's highly-valued midfielder Michel, is confident that everything will be different this time around.

Interview from DUNCAN SHAW in Madrid.

MIGUEL Gonzalez del Campo, better known simply as Michel, looks forward to Real Madrid's return against Bayern Munich by looking back . . . 15 years.

On an April evening in 1973 he remembers vividly watching with his family, on television, as Real Madrid lost to Ajax Amsterdam in the semi-finals of the European Champions' Cup. Michel remembers his father turning off the set. And he remembers how, at the age of ten, he brashly promised: "When I play for Real Madrid, no-one's going to beat us in the European Cup . . ."

Powerful

Fifteen years later, that youngster's prediction is on the point of coming true. Miguel Gonzalez del Campo, known simply as Michel in football terms, is now the powerful right-sided midfielder hugely involved in the attempt of the Spanish champions to bring the European Cup back to Madrid after a 22-year absence. As Michel says: "Lack of confidence was never my problem. I hope that this doesn't sound like arrogance, but I have to admit that I had a special aptitude and talent for football . . .

"My struggle has not been to believe in myself, unlike many players, but rather to consistently harness my talents for the good of the team as a whole."

These special talents were first demonstrated in the tough knock-about matches which took place daily on a patch of waste ground in the working-class suburb of Los Angeles. Michel was tall and strong for his age, which helped him to protect himself when the older boys bacame angry because they couldn't take the ball off him.

His height did not prevent him from becoming adept in ball control and dribbling. As he says: "I have always been taller than almost every other midfielder, at all levels of the game.

"But I don't see this as a disadvantage. All of the Real Madrid midfielders are tall: myself, Gallegeo, Martin Vazquez and especially Jankovic, and it doesn't hold us back."

Apart from running these boyhood matches from midfield, Michel was also often the top scorer, thanks to a powerful and accurate shot.

He joined the youth sections of Real Madrid at 15, and made steady progress up the ladder despite annoying many of the coaches with his over-confidence and precociousness.

"In my early days at the club I earned a few black marks by always thinking that I knew better than the coach.

"In addition, out on the field I used to try to humiliate my marker by beating him and then returning to do it again, or slip the ball between his legs every five minutes.

"I suppose that I was just too full of myself. They eventually suceeded in making me play more directly, with a greater awareness of the needs of the team."

Michel joined Real's second division junior team Castilla in 1981, at 18, and quickly won a regular place as a fast right-winger. The following year, Emilio Butragueno, Manuel Sanchis, Chendo and Martin Vazquez joined him at Castilla, and they all progressed into the Real first team and then the national side at approximately the same time -

"It's been wonderful for us all to move up the ladder together, to share the moments of euphoria and help each other when things have gone wrong."

Out of this group of five, only Martin Vazquez was not in the Spanish Under-21 team which lost the 1984 European final to England. By then, all of them had made their Real Madrid debuts. Michel, however, was the only one of the five who had difficulty in settling into the Real squad.

"Some of the established stars didn't take kindly to my brash, super-confident style. In the circumstances, I suppose you can hardly blame them.

"I realised that I would have to change my attitude. To begin with, I had a few problems with Gallegeo, but since then we have become good friends."

Debut

Michel established himself as a fixture on the right of the Real midfield in season 1984-1985, despite a three match suspension and £500 club fine for being sent off against Hercules of Alicante.

He justified the faith in him of coach Luis Molowny by practically destroying Videoton single-handedly in the first leg of the UEFA Cup final, scoring the first and then setting up goals for Santillana and Waldano in the 3-0 away win.

He began the following season in exuberant form, and was called up for his international debut in the friendly against Austria in November 1985. "But it was a big letdown," he says, "a goalless draw and I didn't do anything special."

But he made amends in style the following month, scoring with a superb swerving free-kick. He had arrived on the international scene, and has been a fixture for Spain ever since.

Chances

Real Madrid's dramatic revival in season 1985/86 — the league title regained after six years and the UEFA Cup retained in swashbuckling style — owed a lot to Michel's powerful runs and crosses from the right.

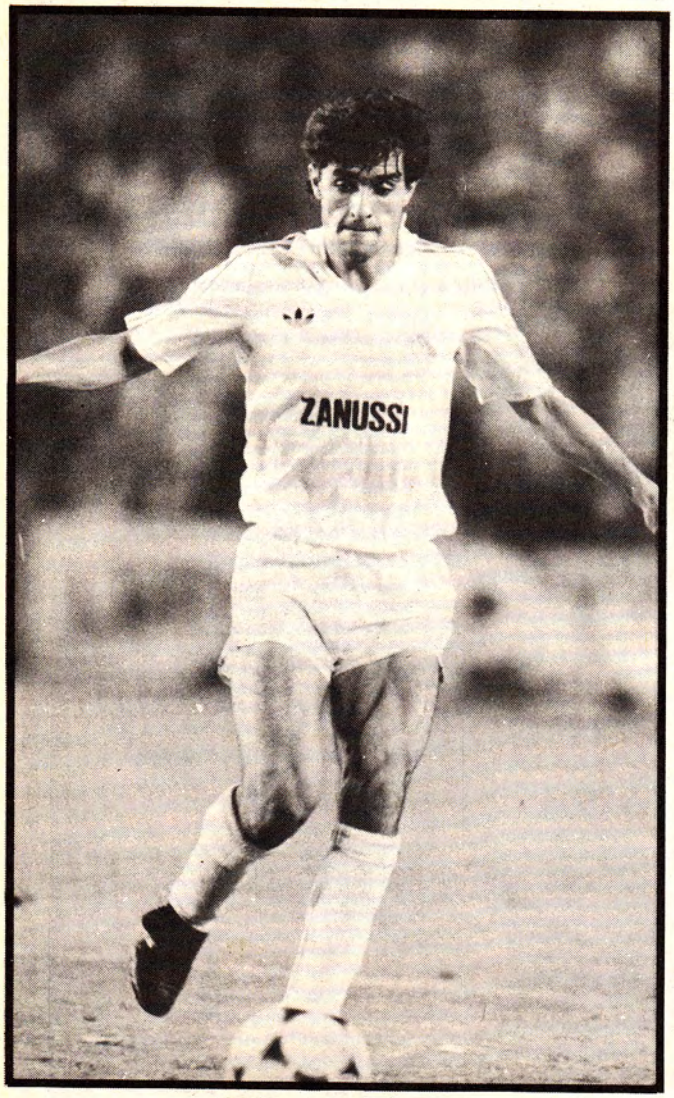
At the end of it all came the World Cup, in which Michel's performances seemed to satisfy everybody but himself. "I didn't play badly, but I should have created more chances, especially in the quarter-final against Belgium. We should have beaten them long before the penalty shoot-out."

The second major disappointment in Michel's career occurred in April 1987, when Real crashed out of the European Cup to Bayern Munich .

He says : "We completely lost our heads in the first leg. Juanito stupidly got himself sent off and the rest of us made crucial mistakes that earned us a 4-1 defeat."

MADRID goalkeeper Buyo and his defenders give the referee a tough time in last year's semi-final against Bayern Munich.

AITS VENGE



MICHEL... afraid of no-one.

But Michel and his colleagues are now presented with the opportunity for revenge over Bayern, and so move closer to fulfilling the bold claim that he made 15 years ago.

"This year, Real have a great chance of regaining the European Cup, probably as good a chance as at any time since our last win in 1966.

"We are playing some splendid attacking football, constantly creating openings and scoring goals. And another advantage is that with a five-point lead in the league, we don't have to worry so much about the race for the title.

"We're not worried about having to face Bayern again. After having knocked out quality teams like Napoli and Porto (thanks to his own powerfully-struck goals in Portugal), why should we be worried about anyone?"

He continues in characteristically confident style when our conversation turns to Spain's prospects in the European Championship finals.

"The way I see it, apart from hosts Germany there are no real favourites. All of the other seven teams are at about the same level, and any could reach the final.

"Spain should reach the semi-finals at least, and if we could just find the right kind of partner for Butragueno upfield, then we will be extremely difficult to stop.

"Success for Real Madrid in the European Cup will be a magnificent boost to our chances in Germany."

WORLD SOCCER EURO-SPECIAL

CHAMPIONS CUP

Quarter-finals: March 2 and 16

BAYERN MUNICH	v	REAL MADRID
	First round	
4-0 v CSKA Sredets Wegmann 2, Dorfner, and Brehme		2-0 v Napoli Michel pen, Tendillo
1-0 v CSKA Sredets Kogl		1-1 v Napoli Butragueno
Bayern 5-0 on agg		Real Madrid 3-1 on agg
	Second round	
1-2 v Neuchatel Xamax Matthaus		2-1 v FC Porto (holders) Hugo Sanchez, Sanchis
2-0 v Neuchatel Xamax Pflugler, Wegmann		2-1 v FC Porto (holders) Michel 2
Bayern 3-2 on agg		Real Madrid 4-2 on agg

BENFICA	v	ANDERLECHT
	First round	
4-0 v Partizan Tirana Hametaj og, Mozer, Aguas 2		1-0 v Malmo Vervoort
Walkover		1-1 v Malmo Vervoort
Benfica 4-0 on agg		Anderlecht 2-1 on agg
	Second round	
0-0 v Aarhus		2-1 v Sparta Prague Vervoort, Frimann
1-0 v Aarhus Nunes		1-0 v Sparta Prague Nilis
Benfica 4-0 on agg		Anderlecht 3-1 on agg

BORDEAUX	v	PSV EINDHOVEN
	First round	
2-0 v Dynamo E.Berlin Ferreri 2		3-0 v Galatasaray Gillhaus, Koeman, Koot
2-0 v Dynamo E.Berlin Zl.Vujovic, Ferreri		0-2 v Galatasaray
Bordeaux 4-0 on agg		PSV 3-2 on agg
	Second round	
0-0 v Lillestrom		2-1 v Rapid Vienna Van Aerle, Gillhaus
1-0 v Lillestrom Ferreri		2-0 v Rapid Vienna Lerby, Gillhaus
Bordeaux 1-0 on agg		PSV 4-1 on agg

STEAUA BUCHAREST	v	GLASGOW RANGERS
	First round	
4-0 v MTK Budapest Hagi 2, Boloni, Lacatus		0-1 v Kiev Dynamo
0-2 v MTK Budapest		2-0 v Kiev Dynamo Falco, McCoist
Steaua 4-2 on agg		Rangers 2-1 on agg
	Second round	
3-1 v Omonia Nicosia Hagi 2, Iovan		3-1 v Gornik Zabrze McCoist, Durrant, Falco
2-0 v Omonia Nicosia Christofi og, Lacatus		1-1 v Gornik Zabrze McCoist pen
Steaua 5-1 on agg		Rangers 4-2 on agg

BROTHERS IN BOOTS

PSV EINDHOVEN are running away with the Dutch championship. They won a record 17 matches from the start of the season and then they triumphed 1-0, despite a hail of missiles from the Amsterdam crowd, away to Ajax in a vital league match against their only title contenders. Now they have their sights set on the Champions' Cup. But PSV represent more than Dutch football. Two of their star names are Danes: SOREN LERBY and FRANK ARNESEN.

Feature by JIM HOLDEN

IT is entirely fitting that Frank Arnesen and Soren Lerby, brothers-in-boots, should be finishing their careers as they begun them together.

Both are now members of the talented PSV Eindhoven team racing away at the top of the Dutch league and which many feel is a good each-way bet to win the European Cup this season.

Both say they want to quit in two years' time having won a major European honour.

Fifteen years ago Arnesen and Lerby were rough and ready teenagers with Copenhagen club Fremad Amager, full of enthusiasm and natural ability. Lerby, indeed, needed only 12 first team matches to convince Ajax Amsterdam, then European champions in the era of Cruyff the player, to take him along with Arnesen on professional terms.

Ajax

Arnesen was 17, Lerby 16, when they packed their boots for football fame and fortune overseas. Both became integral members of the Dutch national side while with Ajax, but it was a time when the club always came before country. Denmark still struggled to translate talents spread across Europe into a cohesive national team.

By the time Sepp Piontek became Danish manager in 1979 UEFA rules were beginning to help national sides. And by then Arnesen and Lerby were on the European transfer merry-go-ahead. Arnesen travelled via Valencia and Anderlecht to PSV, while Lerby's route took in Bayern Munich and Monaco.

In the intervening years their paths crossed with the emergence of the national team as a global force.

Lerby says: "It was all down to Piontek really. He started us played in the contra style and after a few years we began to improve. We were also lucky because we had a number of good players together at the same time. Obviously Frank was one of them.

"We have always played well together, and that perhaps helped with the national team even though we were with different clubs."

Special

Arnesen says: "Soren and I have always had a special something on the pitch even though we are very different as players and people. We never have to talk to each other during a game. It's as if we can read each other's minds."

Arnesen says: "Soren and I have always had a special something on the pitch even though we are very different as players and people. We never have to talk to each other during a game. It's as if we can read each other's minds."

They complement each other, Lerby defensive by nature whereas Arnesen plays a more attacking role, scavenging down the wings. His drive has become one of the most crucial factors in Denmark's glory years, particularly when you consider the horrendous injuries he has suffered.

A knee injury at Valencia kept Arnesen out of football for two years, but he said: "I wanted to try to come back and play in major tournament finals. It was a long time to be out, but I enjoy the game more now because I know what I missed.

"Now I'm like a little child running about in my enthusiasm, but the time out also gave me a respect for the game."

Arnensen's enthusiam sometimes lets his fiery temperament get the better of him. He was sent off against West Germany in the World Cup finals in Mexico and missed the 5-1 defeat against Spain which saw Denmark eliminated. It was significant, because Arnenesen provides the drive to lift teammates if or when things go wrong.

Lerby is more cultured even getting into Eric Batty's World XI. He is the epitome of the modern European star; always in control on the ball, precise, in the pass, and with an eye for goal.

Memory

My abiding memory of him will be a June day in 1985 when he helped Denmark beat the Soviet Union 4-2 in a World Cup qualifier in the afternoon. After the final whistle he didn't even have time to change out of his kit before being whisked away in a helicopter en route to Munich and playing for Bayern the same night as they won the German title.

The jet-set footballer had come a long way from his roots in working class Copenhagen.

Now he and Arnesen are together again in the little Denmark that is PSV Eindhoven, where national team stars Ivan Neilsen and Jan Heintze are also club colleagues.

Little luck

Lerby says: "We have a good squad who are all international players and we do have a chance of winning the European Cup with a little luck that you need. And if it's not this year it could be the next. I want to play for two more years and winning it would be a great way to finish."

Arnesen also wants to play for two more years, and even if he doesn't get that medal, he will always have memories to share with his good friend and colleague Soren Lerby.

Considering the way PSV charged victorious, through their record-breaking first 17 games of the Dutch season, few could happily bet against them in Europe.

SOREN LERBY... wants to go out as a winner.

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RIJKA COME FROM

THE CURRENT Cup-winners' cup quarter-final field is the weakest for years. But that's good news for holders Ajax Amsterdam, who have stumbled from one crisis to another since their victory over Lokomotiv Leipzig in Athens last May. Most complex problem of all concerns sweeper FRANK RIJKAARD.

Feature by SIMON KUPER

FRANK Rijkaard is, at last, coming back in from the cold. After months of uncertainty, he has signed for Sporting Lisbon and can at last train again with team-mates instead of on his own at Dutch federation headquarters at Zeist.

Rijkaard is one of Holland's finest players. Second in natural ability, probably, to Ruud Gullit with whom he shares so much in common. But right now Gullit is flying high in the full glare of international publicity. Rijkaard, by contrast, has been out of sight.

Not only is he missing from the Ajax squad preparing to face young boys Bern in the quarter-finals of the Cup-winners Cup, his place in the Dutch European Championship effort is in doubt.

Rijkaard's troubles began just over a year ago. PSV Eindhoven, knowing that Gullit was quitting them for Milan, decided to poach Rijkaard from Ajax to take his place. Rijkaard still had more than two years of his contract with Ajax to run. But he signed an option to join PSV last summer.

As he left a clandestine meeting with PSV officials, Rijkaard remembers thinking: "This is all wrong."

But by then it was too late. Or was it?

Ajax boss Johan Cruyff was furious when he discovered what had been going on behind his back. He swept into action and after long hours of argument it was agreed that Rijkaard would stay at Ajax after all.

But PSV would be paid a share of the fee Ajax eventually earned when Rijkaard was sold, as seemed inevitable at one stage or another, to Italy.

Rijkaard returned to action with Ajax and the season ended in triumph with a return to European glory days thanks to success in the Cup-winner's Cup. Even better, when Marco Van Basten was sold to Milan during the summer, Cruyff nominated Rijkaard as new captain.

Argument

But, despite all the outward signs, Ajax was not a happy place. Several of the most experienced players were not happy with their work under Cruyff. Van Basten had already gone; a little later both fullbacks, Sonny Silooy and Peter Boeve, left. Cruyff was involved in a well-publicised argument with the directors over the club's transfer policy. And then Rijkaard fell out with Cruyff.

Everything came to a head during training. Rijkaard stormed out, saying he would never play for Ajax or Cruyff again. Cruyff responded that he had better be ready to twiddle his thumbs for 18 months, since Ajax would never release him before his contract expired.

Milan, as if they did not already have enough foreigners on their books, immediately stepped in to secure a first option on any transfer. But, because the season was in full swing, they could not complete any deal until the summer.

In the meantime, Milan president Silvio Berlusconi thought Rijkaard might be able to negotiate a loan deal somewhere else in Europe for the rest of the campaign.

Cruyff then quit Ajax himself, just as Rijkaard was talking with Sporting Lisbon, they slipped way behind Porto and Benfica in the Portuguese league and needed some fresh blood. Officials travelled to Amsterdam to negotiate a fee with Ajax, and Rijkaard travelled to Lisbon to look over his new club.

Then, stalemate. Financial and banking confusion prevented

KAARD MES IN M COLD

Sporting from providing the down-payment on which Ajax insisted before releasing Rijkaard's registration.

And in the middle of all that, Sporting's slide continued to such an alarming extent that coach Keith Burkinshaw was dismissed. The Rijkaard deal was forgotten: Sporting had bigger problems to resolve.

At the suggestion of the Dutch federation, Rijkaard accepted the chance to train on his own in Zeist. It was a lonely existence, resolved only when Sporting at last remembered Rijkaard and came up with the cash to complete a deal which takes him to Lisbon for two-and-a-half years. Now he can dream again of appearing in the European finals and joining forces once more with Gullit, a boyhood friend in Amsterdam.

Playground

Rijkaard, like Gullit, was born in Holland of Dutch West Indian parents. His father was a professional footballer who came to Holland with team-mate (the father of current Dutch international Gerald Vanenburg). Rijkaard and Gullit played in the same kickabout games on a neighbourhood playground, and in their early teens they played for the same amateur club, DWS, and then in national schoolboy sides.

Pim Bosma, their manager at DWS, remembers "Gullit was a cocky boy, Rijkaard was quieter". But Rijkaard has much in common with Gullit. They have the same Dutch West Indian background and they are the same age (born, in fact, in the same month).

They even made their international debuts in the same match against Switzerland, when they were 18, Gullit coming on for Rijkaard in the second half. The Swiss commentator failed to notice the switch.

Rijkaard had first appeared for Ajax when he was 17, in a team which included Soren Lerby, Frank Arnesen and Ruud Krol. Even in such company his technique was remarkable, especially in someone of his height, (6 foot 2 in).

He was also creative, intelligent and strong. It was the ideal team for a young player. Rijkaard recalls: "Everyone said: 'You're doing well!' I just laughed. I was being guided."

But the old Ajax team was falling apart. In the summer of 1983, Johan Cruyff, Ajax's last experienced player, left the club. Rijkaard, then 21, suffered a loss of form which lasted for two seasons. His confidence went, just at the moment when he was expected to give a lead.

Lacked

The more important the game, the less he took the initiative. Managers, press and even team mates began to say that he lacked the mental toughness that was needed for the big games.

Moreover, his languid demeanour could give the impression that he was lazy. Ajax's manager, Aad De Mos complained: "You won't win a war with men like Rijkaard".

De Mos and Holland's managers tried Rijkaard in many positions, which did nothing to restore his confidence. He played at centre-half, right-half, sweeper, centre-back and striker for Holland. For Ajax he has appeared in all these positions as well as right-back.

Nobody not even Rijkaard himself, knew which was his ideal place, and one manager said that he was "one of those players for whom a position has not been invented".

Exchange

Rijkaard's confidence hit rock-bottom in 1984, when he asked the Dutch manager Kees Rijvers to take him off in the middle of an international. Ajax offered him to FC Groningen, in exchange for Erwin Koeman, then as now on the fringes of the national squad. Embarrassingly for Rijkaard, Groningen refused to take him. But then Rijkaard suddenly started to play well again. He returned to the national side, and in May 1985, in a crucial international against Hungary, played brilliantly as sweeper, marking Tibor Nylasi out of the match, organising his defence faultlessly, and occasionally even joining in an attack. Cruyff took over as Ajax's manager, and Rijkaard flourished.

Whatever their more recent disagreements, Frank Rijkaard — if he is there in West Germany in June in the European showdown — will owe Cruyff a debt of thanks.

WORLD SOCCER EURO-SPECIAL

CUP-WINNERS' CUP

Quarter-finals: March 2 and 16

ATALANTA	**V**	**SPORTING LISBON**
	First Round	
1-2 v Merthyr Tydfil **Progna**		**4-0 v FC Tirol** **Sealy 2, Cascavel 2**
2-0 v Methyr Tydfil **Garlini, Cantarutti**		**2-4 v FC Tirol** **Sealy, Cascavel**
Atlanta 3-2 on agg		**Sporting Lisbon 6-4 on agg.**
	Second Round	
0-1 v OFI Crete		**0-1 v Kalmar**
2-0 v OFI Crete **Nicolini, Garlini**		**5-0 v Kalmar** **Cascavel 3, Sealy, Duilio**
Atalanta 2-1 on agg		**Sporting 5-1 on agg**
MARSEILLE	**V**	**ROPS**
	First round	
0-0 v Lokomotiv Leipzig		**0-0 v Glentoran**
1-0 v Lokomotiv Leipzig **K.Allofs**		**1-1 v Glentoran** **Kallio**
Marseille 1-0 on agg.		**Rops on away goals:1-1 agg**
	Second Round	
4-0 v Hajduk Split **Papin, Diallo, Allofs, Giresse**		**1-0 v Vllaznia** **Pollack**
0-2 Hajduk Split		**1-0 v Vllaznia Skoder** **Pollack**
Marseille 4-2 on agg.		**Rops 2-0 on agg**
MECHELEN	**V**	**MINSK DYNAMO**
	First round	
1-0 v Dinamo Bucharest **Den Boer**		**2-0 v Genclerbirligi** **Zigmantovich, Gotsmanov**
2-0 v Dinamo Bucharest **Hofkens, Den Boer**		**2-1 v Genclerbirligi** **Derkach, Kondratiev**
Mechelen 3-0 on agg.		**Minsk 4-1 on agg.**
	Second round	
0-0 v St.Mirren		**1-1 v Real Sociedad** **Kondratiev**
2-0 v St.Mirren **Ohana 2**		**0-0 v Real Sociedad**
Mechelen 2-0 on agg.		**Minsk on away goals: 1-1 agg**
YOUNG BOYS BERN	**V**	**AJAX AMSTERDAM (holders)**
	First round	
1-2 v Dunajska Streda **Zuffi**		**4-0 v Dundalk** **Rijkaard, Blind, Winter, Stapleton**
3-1 v Dunajska Streda **Zuffi, Weber, Maissen**		**2-0 v Dundalk** **Newe og, Meijer**
Young Boys 4-3 on agg.		**Ajax 6-0 on agg.**
	Second round	
1-2 v Den Haag **Zuffi**		**1-0 v Hamburg** **Meijer**
1-0 v Den Haag **Fimian**		**2-0 v Hamburg** **Muhren, Meijer**
Young Boys on away goals: 2-2 agg.		**Ajax 3-0 on agg.**

BAYER LEVERKUSEN v BARCELONA

First round

0-0 v FK Austria	2-0 v Belenenses Mortalla, Victor
5-1 v FK Austria Rolff 2, Schrier, Horster, Cha	0-1 v Belenenses
Bayer Leverkusen 5-1 on agg	Barcelona 2-1 on agg

Second round

1-1 Toulouse Schreier	2-0 v Moscow Dynamo Amarilla, Schuster
1-0 v Toulouse Schreier	0-0 v Moscow Dynamo
Bayer Leverkusen 2-1 on agg	Barcelona 2-0 on agg

Third round

2-2 v Feyenoord Buncol, Falkenmayer	4-1 v Flamurtari Urbano, Lineker 2, Carrasco
1-0 v Feyenoord Gotz	0-1 v Flamurtari
Bayer Leverkusen 3-2 on agg	Barcelona 4-2 on agg

ESPANOL v VITKOVICE

First round

1-0 v Borussia Mg Pineda	1-1 v AIK Stockholm Staricny
4-1 v Borussia Mg Valverde, Perez, Golobart, Pineda	2-0 v AIK Stockholm Dostal, Houska
Espanol 5-1 on agg	Vitkovice 3-1 on agg

Second round

2-0 v Milan Zubillaga, Pichi Alonso	2-1 v Dundee United Dostal 2
0-0 v Milan	1-1 v Dundee United Vlk
Espanol 2-0 on agg	Vitkovice 3-2 on agg

Third round

1-1 v Internazionale Lauridsen	2-0 v Vitoria Guimaraes
1-0 v Internazionale Orejuela	2-0 v Vitoria Guimaraes Kovacik, Grussmann
Espanol 2-1 on agg	Vitkovice 5-4 on pens: 2-2 on agg

PANATHINAIKOS v CLUB BRUGGE

First round

2-0 v Auxerre Barret og, Vichos	0-2 v Zenit Lenigrad
2-3 v Auxerre Vassilou, Saravakos	5-0 v Zenit Leningrad Brylle 4, Ceulemans
Panathinaikos 4-3 on agg	Club Brugge 5-2 on agg

Second round

1-0 v Juventus Saravakos	1-3 v Red Star Belgrade Beyens
2-3 v Juventus Saravakos, Dimpulos	4-0 v Red Star Belgrade Brylle, Ceulemans, Radanovic og, Beyens
Panathinaikos on away goals: 3-3 agg	Club Brugge 5-3 on agg

Third round

2-5 v Honved Saravakos 2	0-3 v Borussia Dortmund
5-1 v Honved Valchos 2, Antoniou, Mavridis, Batsinilas	5-0 v Borussia Dortmund Ceulemans, L.Van der Elst 3, F.Van der Elst
Panathinaikos 7-6 on agg	Club Brugge 5-3 on agg

VERONA v WERDER BREMEN

First round

1-1 v Pogon Szezecin Elkjaer	5-0 v Mjondalen Riedle 2, Ordenewitz, Sauer, Wolter
3-1 v Pogon Szecin Elkjaer 2, Di Gennaro pen	0-1 v Mjondalen
Verona 4-2 on agg	Werder Bremen 5-1 on agg

Second round

1-1 v Utrecht Berthold	1-4 v Moscow Spartak Burgsmuller
2-1 v Utrecht Di Gennaro, Verrips og	6-2 v Moscow Spartak Neubarth 2, Ordenewitz, Sauer, Riedle, Burgsmuller
Verona 3-2 on agg	Werder Bremen 7-6 on agg

Third round

3-1 v Sportul Studentesc Fontolan, Pacione, Elkjaer pen	2-1 v Tbilisi Dynamo Neubarth, Riedle
1-0 v Sportul Studentesc Elkjaer	1-1 v Tbilisi Dynamo Schaaf
Verona 4-1 on agg	Werder Bremen 3-2 on agg

UEFA CUP REVIEW

ESPANOL THE SHOCK TEAM

EUROPE'S surprise packet this season has been the "other" club from Barcelona, modest Espanol. So far their UEFA Cup challenge has swept them to victory over Milan, Borussia Monchengladbach and Internazionale. Now they face TJ Vitkovice as clear favourites to reach the last four.

DUNCAN SHAW reports

ESPANOL'S progress in the UEFA Cup has been little short of sensational.

The first to be humbled by the little-known men splendidly coached by the aggressive young Javier Clemente were Borussia Monchengladbach.

Espanol, playing their habitual counter-attack game, surprisingly won 1-0 in the Federal Republic with a goal from Miguel Pineda, and then swamped the Germans 4-1 in the return.

The Spaniards turned the same trick in the second round against Milan — Gullit, Van Basten et al. They again shocked European football, winning 2-0 in Leece — San Siro being banned from Berlusconi's team — thanks to strikes from Zubillaga and Picho Alonso, and held the Italians to a goalless draw in Barcelona.

Then it was back to Italy, this time to San Siro to face an Inter team packed with ageing heroes. On a freezing night, Inter should have pressed home their advantage once Serena gave them the lead.

But then Clemente turned the match with one of his typically astute substitutions, sending on Dane John Lauridsen, who promptly made it 1-1 with a looping header.

Back in the Sarria stadium again, Espanol booked their place in the quarter-finals without excessive difficulties. Orejuela headed them into a 1-0 lead, and ineffective Inter were incapable of penetrating a solid Spanish defence.

But while Espanol have been humbling the big names of Europe, they've been performing indifferently in the Spanish league, and are back in the mid-table position they have occupied for most of their uneventful history.

Espanol were founded in 1900, the title "Spanish" being adopted to distinguish them from local rivals Barcelona who had been founded by a mixed group of foreigners a year earlier.

Espanol have always lived in the shadow of the more popular and successful Barcelona, right up until this season's UEFA Cup exploits.

FULL NAME: Real Club Deportivo Espanol.
ADDRESS: Calle Ricardo Villa, s/n.
STADIUM: Sarria, inaugurated 1923, capacity 41,000, venue of 1982 World Cup matches between Italy, Brazil and Argentina.
NO. OF MEMBERS: 17,600.
COLOURS: Blue and white striped shirts, blue shorts and white socks.
OTHER SPORTS: Basketball, volleyball and roller-skate hockey.
HONOURS: Spanish Cup winners 1929 and 1940.

The fierce rivalry between the two clubs has had a political as well as a sporting significance.

Espanol is largely the club of Spaniards from other regions who find themselves in the Catalan capital for professional reasons, be they Andalusian bricklayers, Galician doctors or civil servants from Madrid.

Barca, on the other hand, is the flagship of Catalonia, supported by practically all of the native Catalans.

During the dictatorship of General Franco, the local rivalry became even fiercer since Espanol attracted the support of the military personnel and policemen sent by Madrid to keep a close eye on the largely anti-Francoist Catalans.

Espanol have only been out of the first division for two seasons since the Spanish league commenced in 1928. But the only major trophies that they've picked up in their long history have been two Spanish cups, in 1929 and 1940.

Their European record is also very brief: they qualified for the UEFA Cup in 1974 and again three years later, but failed to make much of an impact beyond the Pyrenees.

Until this year, the most exciting period in Espanol's history was from 1963 to 1965, when Alfredo Di Stefano and Ladisla Kubala — formerly the stars at Real Madrid and Barcelona respectively — lined up together in the Sarria stadia in the twilight of their careers.

This history of mediocrity came to an abrupt halt in July 1986, when the club jumped at the chance of signing on as coach 36-year-old Javier Clemente.

Clemente, of course, had been the remarkably young coach who had taken Athletic Bilbao to the championship in 1983 and to the double the following year, with an aggressive team built around violent defensive lynchpin Andoni.

In January 1986, Bilbao sacked Clemente after — in typically arrogant and headstrong fashion — he had sworn that the indisciplined but immensely popular forward Manolo Sarabia would never again play in the first team as long as he remained in charge.

Clemente's first achievement at Espanol was to sign on two splendid forwards: Pichi Alonso, eternal substitute at Barca, and the small, elusive winger Ernesto Valverde, from Sestao. Then he turned his attention to building a rock-solid defence and a tough four-man midfield out of the players already at the club.

Some fans at first complained that Clemente was trying to build another Bilbao. But the complaints turned to cheers when the new Espanol chased Real Madrid and Barca for the title and ended up in third place.

There have also been complaints that the conflictive Clemente has sullied the image of the club by his slanging matches with his enemies, prinicipally Bilbao president Pedro Aurtenetxe and Atletico Madrid coach Cesar Luis Menotti.

But the majority of Espanol fans and directors are desperate for Clemente to stay.

It is an open secret that Barcelona would like Clemente to take over at Camp Nou in the summer.

Clemente knows that he will never win the league with the players he has at Espanol. But — in the light of what happened to Monchengladbach, Milan and Inter — only a fool would bet against him getting his hands on the UEFA Cup.

THE PLAYERS

Thomas NKONO — 32-year-old goalkeeper signed after starring for Cameroon in the 1982 World Cup. Spectacular, but prone to silly mistakes.

Javier ETXEBERRIA — 23-year-old reserve goalkeeper signed last summer from Sestao.

Jose JOB — Tough-tackling right back, aged 28. A reserve since the arrival of Urkiaga.

Santiago URGUIAGA (pictured) — 29-year-old overlapping right-back signed by Clemente from Bilbao in July 1987. 14 caps for Spain.

Miguel ANGEL — Secure sweeper, aged 25. Hails from Sevilla.

Josep GALLART — Tall and commanding centre-back. A product of the club's youth policy, aged 26.

Francisco FRANCIS — 25-year-old utility defender signed from the Real Madrid nursery team Castilla in June 1986.

Miguel SOLER — A player transformed by Clemente. Originally a left-winger, was immediately switched to attacking left-back by the new coach in August 1986. So successful in new position that made Spain debut in 1-3 defeat away to Rumania, April 1987. Should be in Spain's European Championship squad. Aged 22, another youth product.

Ignacio INAKI — 28-year-old midfielder, occasionally sweeper.

Manuel ZUNIGA — Powerful 27-year-old midfielder, good at man-to-man marking.

Diego OREJUELA — Tall midfielder who scored in 1-0 home defeat of Inter. Aged 25, another youth product.

Jon LAURIDSEN — Espanol's answer to Bernd Schuster. Blond Danish international midfield playmaker, aged 28. Often kept on subs' bench by Clemente for tactical reasons. Signed from Esjberg in 1981.

Joan GOLOBART — Tall 27-year-old reserve midfielder.

Javier ZUBILLAGA — Stocky left-sided midfielder signed from Real Sociedad in June 1987. Aged 28.

Ernesto VALVERDE — Diminutive, speedy and exciting winger on the verge of the national team. 24 years old. Signed by Clemente from Sestao in June 1986.

Jesus GARCIA PITARCH — 24-year-old reserve winger, signed from Valencia in June 1985.

Eduardo MAURI — Small reserve striker. Youth product, aged 26.

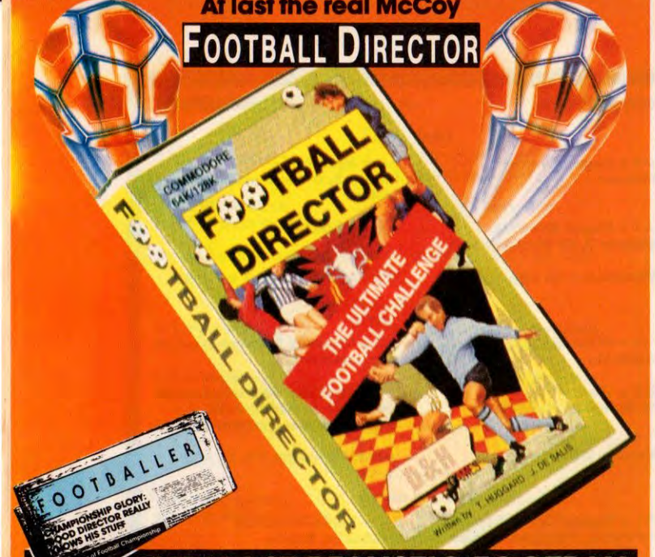
Angel PICHI ALONSO — Veteran centre-forward and top scorer, just turned 35 but still energetic and sharp. Originally made his name with Zaragoza. Frustrated reserve at Barcelona from 1982 to 1986. Scored a hat-trick to beat Gothenburg in the 1986 European Cup semi-finals, but controversially rewarded by Terry Venables by being dropped for final. Clemente's first signing in June 1986. 3 international caps.

Miguel PINEDA — Tall centre-forward who has usually been on the bench since Pichi Alonso's arrival. The son of Spanish immigrants in France, he was playing for Auxerre reserves when signed by Espanol in June 1984. The revelation of Spanish season 1984/1985. ged 23.

Sebastian LOSADA — 20-year-old reserve left-winger, signed in July 1987 from Castilla.

At last the real McCoy

FOOTBALL DIRECTOR



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WORLD SOCCER'S INFORMATION DESK. . .

THE SPRING is generally a quiet time for soccer books after the excitement of the Christmas market. However there are a number of volumes which are well worth a mention.

On the domestic front, the **Football League Club Directory 1988** (Editory: Tony Williams; 2 Elder Cottages, Hatch Beauchamp, Taunton, Somerset TA3 6TH; price £9.95) is an excellent guide to all the clubs of the Football League. This handbook is now in its fourth edition and appears to have sorted out the gremlins of previous years.

First Division clubs have eight pages of statistics and reviews all to themselves with six pages for the lower division sides. Its appearance midway through the season is both a drawback and an advantage: it means it is missed early in the campaign but on the other hand, its squad details are far more advanced than any competing publication.

Also on the domestic front, we have noted recently the revival of some of the best football books from the past. One such, and an appropriate republication, is **The Team that Wouldn't Die,** by John Roberts (Methuen, 11 New Fetter Lane, London EC4P 4EE; price £3.95). This is the book which takes up where the Frank Taylor classic, **The Day A Team Died,** left off. Roberts traces sympathetically and sensitively what has happened to the survivors and families of the Manchester United Munich disaster victims.

On the foreign front, it's harder to recommend books because only a hit-and-miss selection come this way and, being in their own languages, would be of value to only a small number of our readers.

There are exceptions to these rules. One Spanish language book which has everything to commend it to Spanish-speaking fans of the game there is **Futbol y Franquismo** by World Soccer's Madrid correspondent, Duncan Shaw. Published by Alianza Editorial (Calle Milan 38, 28043 Madrid) this is a book examining all the political influences in Spanish football during the Franco years. Fascinating reading — if your Spanish is up to it.

Hungary is not noted for its sports publications. But, in a freelance way, the brothers Andras and Tamas Denes are trying to put that right. They have produced two publications which are English-language statistical works which would appeal to many **World Soccer** readers.

The one is **Champions 1985-86,** which takes each European league champion club from 1986 and presents their title-win in terms of club review, squad names, league table and star profiles. But the second Denes publication to come this way, based on an idea with even more long-term potential, is their **Soviet Football History.** All Soviet international line-ups, all league championship tables, all awards, etc, are listed here. For further information write to Andras and Tamas Denes, Budapest, Beloiannisz u.6. III/6. H-1054 Hungary.

IN ANSWER TO . . .

Club address request from MICHAEL PELL, Los Angeles; T. J. DILKS, Berwick-upon-Tweed; SIMON HILL, Belper, Derbyshire; JOHN KELLY, Prudhoe, Northumberland; CHRIS NEALE, Balsall Heath, Birmingham; DAVID PHILIPSON, Hull, East Yorkshire: J. SMITH, Middlesbrough, Cleveland; G. TILBURY, Chiswick, London W4; GARY BURGESS, Ayr, Scotland; RINO SABATINO; North Perth, Western Australia; EDWARD SEDDON, Walton, Warrington, Cheshire; RICARDO TATUM, Oakville, Ontario, Canada;

C de F America, Toro 100, Mexico 22 DF, Mexico;
FC Barcelona, Estadio Camp Nou, Aristides Maillol s/n, Barcelona, Spain;
FC Bayern Munich, Sabener Strasse 51, 8000 Munich 90, West Germany;
Sport Lisboa e Benfica (re Eusebio), Estadio da Luz, Apartado 21111, 1128 Lisbon codex, Portugal;
Blau-Weiss 90 Berlin. Rathausstrasse 10, 1000 Berlin 42, West Germany;
Borussia Monchengladbach, Bokelstrasse 165 (stadion), 4050 Monchengladbach 1, West Germany;
Brest Armorique FC, 22 Michelet, 29200 Brest, France;
Brondbyerenes Idraetsforening, Klubhuset, Brondby Stadion 26, 2605 Brondby, Denmark;
Cadiz CF, Canovas del Castillo 21, 11001, Cadiz, Spain:
Real Club Celta, Avda Balaidos s/n, 36210 Vigo, Spain;
Dundee Utd, Tannadice Park, Dundee DD3 7JW;
Empoli Foot-ball, Via, Tripoli 50053 Empoli, Italy;
RCD Espanol, Maestro Villa s/n, 08017 Barcelona, Spain;
Guadalajara FC, Estadio de Jalisco, Guadalajara, Mexico;
IFK Göteborg, Storgatan 53, 41138 Gothenburg, Sweden;
Internazionale FC, Piazza Duse 1, 20121 Milano, Italy;
Juventus FC spa (new address), Piazza Crimea 7, 10131 Turin, Italy; Milan AC, via Turati 3, 20121 Milano, Italy;
SAEM du Lille OSC, Stade Grimonprez Jooris, 59800 Lille, France;
CD Logrones, Breton de los Herreros, 17, 1 izq., 26001 Logrono, Spain;
Malmö FF, Box 17031, 20010 Malmö, Sweden;
Matra Racing de Paris, 17 Avenue Hoche, 75008 Paris, France;
AS Monaco, 2 avenue du Prince-Hereditaire-Albert, MC 98000 Monaco, Monte Carlo;
Club Real Murcia, Ronda de Garay s/n. Campo de la Condomina, 30003 Murcia, Spain;
Napoli SSC Piazza dei Martiri 30, 80121 Naples, Italy;
CA Osasuna, Plaza del Castillo 30-31, 31001 Pamplona, Spain;
Paris Saint-Germain FC, 30 rue Bergere, 75009, Paris, France;
Pescara Calcio, Via Campania 41, 65100 Pescara, Italy;
Pisa Sporting Club, Via Risorgimento 30, 56100 Pisa, Italy;
Real Sociedad de Futbol, Paseo del Arbol de Guernica 24, San Sebastian, Spain;
Real Madrid C de F, Estadio Bernabeu, Concha Espina, Madrid 16, Spain;
AS Roma, Via Del Circo Massimo 7, 00153 Rome, Italy;
CA Rosario Central, Avenida Genove y Blvd Avellaneda, 2000 Rosario, Argentina;
CD Sabadell FC Plaza Olimpia s/n, Sabadell (Barcelona), Spain;
Sevilla FC, C. Harinas 18, Seville 1, Spain:
Real Valladolid Deportivo, Macias Picavea 9, 47003 Valladolid, Spain;
Club de Regatas Vasco da Gama, Rua General Americo de Moura 131, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil;
Tj Vitkovice, Sekiton Fussball, Stadion, 7063 Ostrave-Vitkovice, Czechoslovakia.

* Note that we cannot divulge private addresses for players. All correspondence via their clubs.

CHRIS NEALE, Balsall Heath, Birmingham: Second division import in Italy are Cowans and Rideout (England at Bari), Stromberg (Sweden at Atalanta), Branco (Brzil at Brescia) and Barbas (Argentina at Lecce). Federation addresses as follows:- Bulgarian Football Union, PO Box 559, Gotcho Gopin 19, 1000 Sofia, Bulgaria; Ceskoslovensky Fotbalovy Svaz, Na Porici 12, 11530 Praha 1, Czechoslovakia; USSR Football Federation, Luzhnetskaja Naberzhnaja 8, 119270 Moscow, Soviet Union.

KEVIN NIVEN, Mastrick, Aberdeen: Spain's second division consists of these clubs: Pontevedra, Huelva, Sestao, Elche, Rayo Vallecano, Bilbao Athletic, Castellon, Hercules, Malaga, Barcelona Atletico, Oviedo, Figueras, Cartagena, Castilla, Jerez, Santander, Burgos, Grandada, Tenerife, Lerida. The third division is known as the Segunda Division B and consists of 80 clubs split into four regional groups of 20. The top team only from each section will be promoted at the end of the season.

JAMES WHELAN, Clonmel, co Tipperary: The only current book we know of available about the career of Michel Platini is Platini: Il Calciatore d'Oro, published by Conti Editore, Via dei Lavoro 7, 40068 San Lazzaro di Savena, Italy.

N. P. PALMER, Collaroy Beach, Australia: All FIFA member countries are eligible to apply to stage any of FIFA's events — whatever their political regime. The difference between South Africa and everyone else is that South Africa were expelled from FIFA and thus cannot participate in international competition. As far as the World Youth and Under-16 events are concerned, FIFA has encouraged the non-mainstream countries to apply for staging rights to try to encourage the game in many of these countries and to 'spread the cake.'

D. J. STALLARD, Kemsing, Kent: There may be books available in Australia and New Zealand which feature all-time league tables, but they have never come in this direction. For information contact the relevant associations — Australian Soccer Federation, 38 Clarence Street, Sydney, New South Wales 2000, Australia; and New Zealand FA, 111 Apirana Avenue, PO Box 18 296, Glen Innes, Auckland. New Zealand.

JEAN-JACQUES MOREL, Le Havre, France: After leaning Udinese, Surjak played briefly in Spain with Zaragoza. The whereabouts of Terlecki now are unknown.

MARK GERMAIN: For information on coaching in the United States contact the USSF, Viscount Hotel, JFK International Airport, New York NY 11430.

CAIMENA IPPOLITO, Woking Surrey-: Leandro continues to play for Flamengo though whether he will ever play for Brazil again is uncertain. He walked out on the squad just before their departue for the World Cup finals in Mexico, angry that his friend Renato had been dropped. Zico's three children are named Artur junior, Bruno and Thiaga. Club addresses: C de R do Flamengo, Praca Nossa Senhora Ausiliadora, Gavea, Rio de Janeiro; Fluminense FC, Rua Alvaro Chaves 41, Rio de Janeiro 22231.

BRIAN OUTLAW, Middlesborough, Cleveland: The Faroe Islands do stage a national championship but they are not full members of FIFA. The Faroe federation is affiliated through the Danish Boldspil Union (address PH Lings Alle 4, Copenhagen). Matches played by the Faroe Islands cannot thus be considered formal full internationals.

R. STEVENS, Luton, Beds: There is only one edition of World Soccer per month. No foreign launguage edition, nor editorial changes for copies old abroad.

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SIX PAGE WORLD SOCCER SPECIAL ON AFRICA

FROM MARK GLEESON

HOST NATION FAVOURITES FOR TROPHY

RABAH MADJER . . . hopes to lead Algeria's challenge to their Moroccan hosts.

MOROCCO, the pride of Africa since the World Cup finals in Mexico two years ago, are the obvious favourites for the 16th edition of the African Nations Cup, which they host from March 13-27.

The North Africans, who were surprisingly knocked out of the Olympic Games qualifiers by Tunisia in late January, face some formidable opposition from holders Egypt, neighbours Algeria and charismatic Cameroon, but home advantage gives them the edge over the seven other finalists.

The hosts, who have won the tournament only once before, in 1976 when the finals were placed in Ethiopia, have been drawn in possibly the more difficult of the two opening groups, although with the depth of teams at the finals there is little difference between the two sections.

Pulled out

Facing Morocco in group A in Casablanca are neighbours Algeria — who were orginally due to host the finals when Zambia pulled out, but had it taken away fom them after an exchange of insults between Algiers and the Confederation of African Football — Ivory Coast and Zaire.

Egypt, who pipped Cameroon on penalties in the final in Cairo in 1986, face the Indomitable Lions again in Group B, to be played in the capital Rabat, along with Nigeria and upstarts Kenya, who finished second to the Egyptians in the All-Africa Games in Nairobi last August.

Morocco's major challenge, initially, will come from the Algerians, led by Rabah Madjer, who was recently crowned as African Footballer of the Year for his significant role in the success of Portuguese club side FC Porto.

Injuries

But Madjer, now on loan to Spanish club Valencia before joining Bayern Munich in West Germany at the start of the next European season, has not been able to reproduce his club form for his country of late.

He was, of course, with Lakhdar Belloumi, the hero of the Algerian campaign in the 1982 World Cup finals in Spain, but his European wanderings and frequent injuries has seen a slump in his international fortunes, where he has earned 67 caps and scored 37 goals.

And, while the Moroccans can still call on the backbone of the 1986 World Cup side, Algeria have lost much of their sparkle from before Mexico. Nevertheless, they should be able to tax the hosts, and, along with Morocco, emerge from Group A and into the semi-final berths.

The hosts, trained by Brazilian Jose Faria, are hoping Swiss-based Aziz Bouderbala recovers from a knee injury in time for the finals. His role in Mexico was outstanding and since the decline in fortunes of Mohammed Timoumi he is looked upon as the kingpin in the Moroccan line-up.

But even if Bouderbala fails to recover in time, there is a wealth of talent at Faria's disposal, not least goalkeeper Badou Zaki, now in Spain with Mallorca, Abdelmajid Dolmy, Abderrazck Khairi, Azzedine Amanallah and Mustapha el Haddaoui of St Etienne.

And, of course, Timouimi, now with Lokeren in Belgium, and the crafty Merry Krimau of St Etienne, who is in the twilight of his career.

Ivory Coast, whose best performance in seven appearances in the finals of the African Nations Cup has been third place, last year lost to the Moroccans in the Seoul Olympic Games qualifiers.

But it took a late goal for the North Africans to squeeze through and the gifted Ivorians, who bring with them several top-class players from the French and Portuguese leagues, have the potential to upset.

Notably, foreign-based Youssouf Fofana of Monaco and Abdoulage Traore, leader goalscorer in the eliminators with five strikes in the ties against Congo and Malawi, and two domestic players, Pascal Miezen and Zagoli Boli.

Fancied

The same cannot be said of Zaire, who needed penalties to eliminate the more fancied Senegal to qualify for the finals. Since their domination of African football in the early 1970's the Zaireans have steadly gone downhill. Winners of the Nations Cup in 1968 and 1974, they have not been among the honours since their disasterous appearance at the 1974 World Cup finals in West Germany and are playing in the Nations Cup finals for the first time in 14 years.

They, too, will be relying in a backbone of European-based professionals, Eugene Kabongo of Lyon in France being the most renowned.

Egypt, who have been dominating club football on the continent for the past five years but have not been able to turn that superiority into international triumph, besides home victory in 1986, should qualify top of Group B, with the Cameroonians snapping at their heels.

The deadly striking power of Taher Abou Zeid of Al Ahly will be Egypt's trump card, while their defence has always proved to be as hospitable as the Sahara Desert.

But Zeid's club teammate Magdi Abdelghani, the midfield king pin of the Egyptians, will be missing, still under suspension from all CAF competeition. His absence could be the undoing of the Egyptians.

Cameroon's ageing national team have seemingly come to the end of their tenure, as was evident at the All Africa Games in Nairobi where they finished a poor fourth, beaten by Egypt on penalties in the semi-finals and then minnows Malawi in third place play-off, and cannot be fancied to go much further than the semis.

The only really world class youngster among the likes of Emmanuel Kunde, Roger Milla and Jacques Songo'o, is Francois Omar-Biyick, who has been in sensational goalscoring form since his transfer from Canon to Laval in France last July.

There was speculation that Joseph-Antoine Bell, the superb goalkeeper of Marseille, was being encouraged to return from a self-imposed international exile, but whether the "Bruce Grobbelaar of France" will play in Morocco remains to be seen.

Junior

Definately out is the nation's other leading Thomas N'kono, who played such a major role in Espanol's double triumph of the two Milanese clubs, Inter and AC, in the UEFA Cup towards the end of last year.

But with Nigeria and Kenya providing the opposition in Group B, the Indomitable Lions should be able to garner a place in the frist four.

Nigeria, for all their depth at junior level, have not been the same force that won the Nations Cup in 1980 while Kenya, in only their second finals appearance, are the dark horses. Richard Owubokiri (Metz) and Stephen Keshi (Anderlacht) will probably be the only players brought back from European exile.

Talent

Second place in the All African games last year and triumph for club side Gor Mahia in the African Cup Winners' Cup has rejuvenated the game in Kenya, but their inexperience at this level will show despite their obvious talent.

Peter Dawo is probably the foremost goalscorer south of the equator, while Wilberforce Malamba provides much support in the frontline. And in defence, Ambrose Ayoyi was one of the revelations of 1987.

THE FIXTURES
March 13
Group A:
Morocco v Zaire, Algeria v Ivory Coast
March 14
Group B:
cameroon v Egypt, Kenya v Nigeria
March 16
Group A:
Ivory Coast v Zaire, Morocco v Algeria
March 17
Group B:
Cameroon v Nigeria, Egypt v Kenya
March 19
Group A:
Algeria v Zaire, Morocco v Ivory Coast
March 20
Group B:
Cameroon v Kenya, Egypt v Nigeria
March 23
Semi-final: Winner A v runner-up B (Casablanca)
Semi-final: Winner B v runner-up A (Rabat)
March 26
Third and fourth place play-off (Rabat)
March 27
Final (Casablanca)

Road to Morocco

PRELIMINARY ROUND
Angola v Gabon 1-0; 0-1 (1-1 agg Angola won 5-4 on pens)
Guinea v Gambia 2-1; 1-0 (3-1)
Central African Republic v Congo 1-2; 1-5 (1-7)
Lesotho withdrew v Rwanda walkover
Uganda v Somalia 5-0; 0-0 (5-0)
Ethiopia v Tanzania 4-2; Ethiopia withdrew from 2nd leg
Mauritius withdrew v Madagascar walkover
Togo walkover v Equatorial Guinea withdrew
Sierre Leone v liberia 2-1; 1-1 (3-2)
Mali withdrew v Tunisia walkover
FIRST ROUND
Zaire v Angola 3-0; 0-1 (3-1)
Senegal v Guinea 4-0; 0-0 (4-0)
Ivory Coast v Congo 2-0; 2-1 (4-1)
Malawi walkover v Rwanda withdrew
Cameroon v Uganda 5-1; 1-3 (6-4)
Sudan v Tanzania 1-0; 1-1 (2-1)
Kenya v Madagascar 2-0; 1-2 (3-2)
Mozambique v Zimbabwe 1-1; 2-3 (3-4)
Nigeria v Togo 2-0; 1-1 (3-1)
Ghana v Sierre Leone 1-2; 0-0 (1-2)
Algeria v Tunisia 1-0; 1-1 (2-1)
Libya walkover v Zambia disqualified
SECOND ROUND
Senegal v Zaire 0-0; 0-0 (0-0 Zaire won4-2 pens)
Malawi v Ivory Coast 1-2; 0-2 (1-4)
Cameroon v Sudan 2-0; 0-1 (2-1)
Zimbabwe v Kenya 1-1; 0-0 (1-1)
Nigeria v Sierra Leone 3-0; 0-2 (3-2)
Algeria walkover v Libya disqualified Morocco hosts Egypt holders
FINALISTS' LEADING GOALSCORERS
5 — Abdoulaye Traore (Ivory Coast);
4 — Francois Oman-Biyick (Cameroon);
3 — Snday Edobor (Nigeria);
2 — Youssouf Fofana (Ivory Coast); RogerMilla (Cameroon).

RESULTS OF THE FINALISTS AGAINST EACH OTHER 1986-87
ALGERIA
8-3-86 Morocco (n) 0-0 (ANF)
14-3-86 Cameroon (n) 2-3 (ANF)
11-12-86 Ivory Coast (h) 2-1 (F)
14-12-86 Ivory Coast (h) 2-1 (F)
CAMEROON
11-3-86 Morocco (n) 1-1 (ANF)
14-3-86 Algeria (n) 3-2 (ANF)
17-3-86 Ivory Coast (n) 1-0 (ANF)
21-3-86 Egypt (a) 0-0 (ANF)
3-8-87 Kenya (a) 3-3 (AGF)
9-8-87 Egypt (n) 1-1 (AGF)
IVORY COAST
10-3-86 Eygpt (a) 0-2 (ANF)
17-3-86 Cameroon (n) 0-1 (ANF)
20-3-86 Morocco (n) 3-2 (ANF)
11-12-86 Algeria (a) 1-2 (F)
14-12-86 Algeria (a) 1-2 (F)
3-1-87 Nigeria (a) 0-0 (AGQ)
18-1-87 Nigeria (h) 1-0 (AGQ)
18-3-87 Zaire (h) 2-1 (F)
22-3-87 Zaire (h) 1-3 (F)
4-8-87 Egypt (n) 1-2 (AGF)
1-11-87 Morocco (h) 0-0 (OGQ)
15-11-87 Morocco (a) 1-2 (OGQ)
EGYPT
10-3-86 Ivory Coast (h) 2-0 (ANF)
17-3-86 Morocco (h) 1-0 (ANF)
21-3-86 Cameroon (h) 0-0 (ANF)
26-6-87 Kenya (h) 4-0 (OGQ)
12-7-87 Kenya (h) 3-1 (OGQ)
4-8-87 Ivory Coast (n) 1-1 (AGF)
9-8-87 Cameroon (n) 1-1 (AGF)
12-8-87 Kenya (a) 1-0 (AGF)
KENYA
26-6-87 Egypt (a) 0-4 (OGQ)
12-7-87 Egypt (h) 1-3 (OGQ)
3-8-87 Cameroon (h) 3-3 (AGF)
12-8-87 Egypt (h) 0-1 (AGF)
MOROCCO
8-3-86 Algeria (n) 0-0 (ANF)
11-3-86 Cameroon (n) 0-0 (ANF)
17-3-86 Egypt (a) 0-1 (ANF)
20-3-86 Ivory Coast (n) 0-1 (ANF)
1-11-87 Ivory Coast (a) 0-0 (OGQ)
14-11-87 Ivory Coast (h) 2-1 (OGQ)
NIGERIA
3-1-87 Ivory Coast (h) 0-0 (AGQ)
18-1-87 Ivory Coast (a) 0-1 (AGQ)
ZAIRE
18-3-87 Ivory Coast (a) 1-2 (F)
22-3-87 Ivory Coast (a) 3-1 (F)
***Abbreviations: AGF — All Africa Games finals; AGQ — All Africa Games qualifiers; ANF — African Na-tions Cup finals; F — friendly international; OGQ — Olympic Games quali-fier.**

ROLL OF HONOUR
ALGERIA
Sixth appearance
1968 — Eliminated
1980 — Second 1982 — Fouth
1984 — Third
1986 — Eliminated
CAMEROON
Sixth appearance
1970 — Eliminated
1972 — Third
1980 — Eliminated
1984 — Winners
1986 — Second
IVORY COAST
Eleventh appearance
1957 — Winners
1959 — Winners
1962 — Second
1963 — Third
1970 — Third
1974 — Third
1975 — Fourth
1980 — Fourth
1984 — Winners
KENYA
Second appearance
1972 — Eliminated
MOROCCO
Sixth appearance
1972 — Eliminated
1976 — Winners
1978 — Eliminated
1980 — Third
1986 — Fourth
NIGERIA
Seventh appearance
1963 — Eliminated
1976 — Third
1978 — Third
1980 — Winners
1982 — Eliminated
1984 — Second
ZAIRE
Fifth appearance
1968 — Winners
1970 — Eliminated
1972 — Fourth
1974 — Winners

SIX PAGE WORLD SOCCER SPECIAL ON AFRICA

FROM MARK GLEESON

IT'S HISTORY NOW

INTERNATIONAL competitions between African sides date back to the 1930's when Kenya met Uganda in what was to become the first regular match on the continent.

This fixture slowly expanded to include Zanzibar and Tanzania. Other competitions grew up in the north and the west, but in each case they were organised and controlled by the colonial powers.

By the late 1950's, with "the winds of change" slowly coming to Africa, the time was approaching for the African nations to establish their own tournaments.

Such a suggestion first surfaced at the FIFA Conference in 1956 and the following year Africa's representatives met at Khartoum. Attendance was limited to sovereign nations so only four countries, Sudan, Ethiopia, Egypt and South Africa were present. Amongst the representatives at the first meeting was the first President of the CAF, Mr Abdel Aziz Salem, of Egypt (who donated the original Nations Cup trophy), as well as another future president, Mr Tessema, of Ethiopia.

A tournament was arranged for later that year and the draw was made. The newly-formed body now had to face their first problem, the racial and political questions concerning South Africa.

The CAF were the first major sport body to face this problem and their decision would guide how all African sport bodies would react over the next decade.

The South African representative, Mr Fell, offered to send either a black or a white team but the CAF insisted that only a multiracial team would be acceptable and South Africa withdrew.

It was a brave decision because, with only four members, the CAF would have benefited greatly from South African participation and expertise, particularly in areas such as refereeing.

Egypt and Sudan now wanted to play the tournament as a round-robin affair but Ethiopia insisted that the draw had been made and they were entitled to a bye to the final.

They won that argument but it did them little good. Egypt beat Sudan 2-1 in the semi-final and then had a far easier time in the second game, hitting four past Ethiopia. El Diba set a record that is unlikely to ever be beaten by scoring four goals in a Nations Cup final.

Two years later the same three sides gathered in Cairo. For the first and only time the CAF imported referees from Europe. Egypt started off where they left off, beating Ethiopia 4-0. It was something of a controversial game.

The day before the Ethiopians had taken their boots to a local shoe mender and during the match the players started to lose their studs. It was never decided whether this was just shoddy workmanship or a deliberate act of foul play. It can hardly have affected the final result and Ethiopia lost their second game against Sudan which set up a perfect final.

Once again Egypt went ahead, lost the lead and then regained it although in this case they had to wait until the very last minute before Issam scored his second goal of the tournament.

There was at this time a certain amount of turmoil in the CAF. The Egyptian General Secretary had failed to give a report when the members met at the 1960 conference held at the Rome Olympics.

As a result the following year saw a motion to move to the CAF's headquarters to Addis. This was defeated but Ethiopia had the consolation of staging the third championships. For the only time, the games got out of sequence, the tournament not getting under way until 1962.

Many new nations had now gained their independence and with nine countries entered preliminary rounds were required. A North and West African group saw Tunisia triumph over Morocco, Ghana, Nigeria, while Uganda came through from the East African group.

In the finals Uganda gave Egypt a hard time, going ahead in the 16th minute and only losing 2-1, but Tunisia were well beaten by the hosts in an exciting match.

Egypt led for much of the final thanks to a goal from Badawi but a late scoring spell saw the 90 minutes end with the score at 2-2. For the first time extra time was needed with Menguistou and Italo scoring the goals to break Egypt's reign.

The fourth Nations Cup came to Ghana. Under President Kwame Nkrumah sport had been given a great deal of encouragement in the newly-independent nation and the national soccer team had been trained by a succession of European coaches.

The squad had made a European tour in 1962, winning eight of their 12 games, later they also forced a draw with Real Madrid in an exhibition game. The side started the 1963 tournament with a draw against Tunisia, then defeated the holders thanks to two goals from Acquah.

With some beautifully natural and flowing players in attack and a defence built solidly around Odametey, they looked a class above any African team that had emerged before this time.

In the final they took a long time to break down the Sudanese defence but once Aggrey-Fynn scored it opened up a flood gate and Ghana ended with a clear 3-0 advantage.

Having won the tournament on their home soil Ghana now faced the altogether more difficult prospect of defending it in North Africa, Tunisia having been given the right to stage the fifth edition of the competition.

Once again the finals were to involve six teams, with group A being staged in the capital, Tunis, and group B being shared between Sousse and Bizerte.

The two opening games on the 12th of November produced 11 goals. Tunisia beat Ethiopia 4-0, a surprising result considering they had lost 2-4 to them two years before, while over in Sousse Ghana started their defence with a 5-2 thrashing of Congo Leopold.

Of the 11 Ghanian players who had appeared in the previous year's final only defender Odametey remained in the side. Nevertheless, Ghana hit another four goals in their second game against Ivory Coast to secure their position as favourites.

PREVIOUS FINALS

1957 Sudan — Egypt (pts system)
1959 (Egypt) — Egypt (pts system)
1962 (Ethiopia) — Ethiopia 4 Egypt 2
1963 (Ghana) — Ghana 3 Sudan 0
1965 (Tunisia) — Ghana 3 Tunisia 2
1968 (Ethiopia) — Zaire 1 Ghana 0
1970 (Sudan) — Sudan 1 Ghana 0
1972 (Cameroon) Congo 3 Mali 2
1974 (Egypt) — Zaire 2 Zambia 0
1976 (Ethiopia) — Morocco (pts system)
1978 (Ghana) — Ghana 2 Uganda 0
1980 (Nigeria) — Nigeria 3 Algeria 0
1982 (Libya) — Ghana 1 Libya 1 (Ghana 5-4 pen)
1984 (Ivory Coast) — Cameroon 3 Nigeria 1
1986 (Egypt) — Egypt 0 Cameroon 0 (Egypt 5-4 pens)

Meanwhile, Tunisia had been a little lucky to edge out Senegal in group A but they were without doubt one of the finest North African sides we had seen so far.

In Attouga they had one of the best goalkeepers on view and striker Delhoum, winger Djedidi and the midfield pair of Chaibi and Chetali were all good players. They certainly gave Ghana a tough time in the final.

Odoi put the holders in front late in the first half but Tunisia went ahead with goals from Chaibi and Chetali. With the crowd behind them the trophy appeared destined for North Africa but in the 80th minute Osei Kofi equalised.

Ghana, having survived the scare, were now on top and Odoi, who had opened their scoring, struck the decisive goal in extra time.

1968 saw the Nations Cup finals expanded to involve eight teams, yet because the entry had now grown to 23 nations, nine first-round ties had to be played. The enlarged competition allowed two new sides, Congo Brazzaville and Algeria, to battle through to take their place in the finals.

Once in the tournament proper two preliminary groups were staged to produce the four semi-finalists after which point the competition reverted to a knock-out formula. This system has been used ever since with the single exception of 1976.

The new enlarged tournament opened with Ethiopia beating Uganda 2-1 but it was Ivory Coast who looked the most impressive side on the opening days, beating Algeria 3-0 with Pokou scoring two goals.

Two days later, however, Ivory Coast lost to Ethiopia through a last-minute goal, after which their reserves rushed onto the pitch and started fighting with the home side.

Despite the defeat the West Africans went on to secure the runners-up spot by beating Uganda. Ethiopia, meanwhile, retained their unbeaten record with a 3-1 win over Algeria.

This was an extremely experienced home side. Worku Menguistou, who had played in the very first tournament 11 years before, was still leading the attack, Luciano Vassalo, who was to hit three goals that year, was making the fourth of his five eventual appearances while goalkeeper Abebe Guetacheou, who was playing in his second tournament, was also destined to appear in four finals.

The second group had taken place in Asmara where holders Ghana were in trouble in their first game. They twice went behind to Senegal before a late goal from Mfum gave them a point.

They made four team changes, including the dropping of the highly-rated goalkeeper Mensah, and won their next two matches. Congo Kinshasa won their battle with Congo Brazzaville 3-0, then lost 2-1 to Ghana. They therefore went into the final match a point behind Senegal but beat them 2-1 to go through.

In the semi-finals Congo Kinshasa raced to a two-goal lead in just six minutes against the home side. However, goals from veterans Luciano and Menguistou took the game to extra time before Congo's winger Mungamuni scored his second goal to produce the first major shock of the tournament.

The second semi-final was a real classic with Ghana and Ivory Coast sharing seven goals. Pokou hit two and another in the third-place match to equal the tournament scoring record.

However, having had to pick the ball out of the net three times goalkeeper Mensah found himself dropped for the second time in the tournament.

Ghana went into the final favourites but Congo once again upset the odds, with Kalala scoring the only goal of the game. It was a shame that the first Nations Cup game to be televised couldn't produce a more exciting game.

Two years later the competition returned to its first home, Sudan. Ivory Coast started where they had left off, entertaining the crowd but losing. This time they went down to newcomers Cameroon, despite another three goals from Pokou.

Cameroon switched to a 4-4-3 line-up for the next game and beat Ethiopia 3-2 with Ndoga finding the net for the second consecutive match. Ivory Coast, having lost their first game, now threw the group open.

They scored a tough 1-0 win over Sudan and two days later hit Ethiopia for six. Pokou scored a hat-trick in 70 minutes and went on to score five goals, a Nations Cup record for a single match. That 6-1 scoreline also remains a Nations Cup record.

Sudan now defeated Cameroon with goals from Djaksa and Hasabu to put three times tied on four points and Cameroon, having won their first two games, found themselves out of the semi-finals.

DOUMBE LEA . . . a winner for Cameroon in 1986 against Nigeria in Abidjan.

Over in Wad Madani things were more straightforward. Ghana opened by beating Congo Kinshasa 2-0 in a repeat of the previous tournament's final. Owusu, one of the best strikers of his generation, hit both goals. Sunday Ibrahim, soon to be voted the first African player of the year, dominated the midfield in their 4-2-4 line-up and Mensah was back in goal.

Egypt, having missed the last two tournaments due, in part, to the war with Israel, were back and opened with a 4-1 win over Guinea. When Egypt and Ghana drew in their second game it left them both needing only to avoid defeat to make the semi-finals.

This they did, Owusu scoring for Ghana in the draw with Guinea and Egypt edging Congo Kinshasa 1-0. Of the Egyptian side the most noticeable survivor was El Chazli.

He was to hit five goals that year, including a hat-trick in the third-place match, and with six in 1963 and one in 1974 he remains the second highest scorer in the history of the tournament.

In the semi-finals Ghana beat Ivory Coast in extra time, Poku hitting his eighth goal, but Egypt were put out by Sudan.

El-Issed was the hero for the home side, putting them ahead in the 83rd minute only for Egypt to equalise straight from the kick-off. El-Issed struck again in extra time and then extended his scoring spree into the final, putting Sudan ahead after only 12 minutes.

For the second year one goal was enough to decide the issue.

As for Ghana, they had now played in four consecutive tournaments and looked likely to remain the continent's leading force for many years to come.

In 1971 Ghana travelled to Togo for a qualifying match in the Nations Cup and held the home team to a goal-less draw.

There was no surprise in that result, for Ghana were without doubt the continent's leading side at the time.

A few weeks later, however, there was a shattering result — Togo, inspired by the performance of goalkeeper Tommy Sylvestre, won the return match 1-0. Ghana, after reaching four consecutive finals, would not be in the last eight.

There were several other shocks along the way and other leading sides who failed to reach the final included Ivory Coast, Ethiopia and Egypt. In contrast Kenya, Mali, Togo and Morocco were all there for the first time.

The tournament opened in Yaounde with fireworks and celebrations after which Cameroon sent the fans home happy with a 2-1 defeat of Kenya. Cameroon went on to top their group and, with Lea and Tokoto showing some sparkling form up front, looked favourites for a home victory.

Second in the group were Mali who, with Salif Keita leading the attack, were if anything more spectacular. However, they looked very vulnerable at the back and conceded as many goals as they scored.

Group B, played on the coast at Douala, could not have been closer. Four of the six games ended in draws and Zaire (formally Congo Leopold) edged the group. Congo, having lost to Zaire, recovered to beat Sudan 4-2 and then won a draw of lots to take a semi-final place.

The rest of the tournament now exploded to life and the last four games produced 20 goals and some sparkling attacking football. Cameroon allowed their nerves to get the better of them against Congo and went out to a goal from Minga. Mali, meanwhile, won a seven-goal thriller against Zaire in extra time, with Fantamady Keita, who was to finish as the tournaments top scorer, scoring twice.

The excitement continued into the final, Salif Keita was unfit and was taken off but Mali still went ahead close to half time. However, three goals in seven minutes, two of them coming from substitute Mbono, decided the game in Congo's favour.

In 1974 the cup stayed in Central Africa, but moved across to Zaire as, for the second time, the home team collapsed in the semi-finals. Egypt had comfortably won group A, winning each game and scoring seven goals, while Congo, with the core of the 1972 side still present, topped the second group.

Zaire, however, looked the most attractive side and in Ndaye had the best striker on view. By finishing second in group B they came up against Egypt in the semi-finals and when they went two goals down just before the hour their cause seemed hopeless.

Always at their best when attacking, the Zairen side kept pushing forward and Ndaye hit two goals as the Central Africans turned the tables and raced to a 3-2 victory.

The same day Congo's rule came to an end in Alexandria where a hat-trick from Chanda contributed to their extra time defeat.

Zambia, in their first finals, were playing beyond all expectation and they took the lead in the final, lost it, fell behind in extra time and then went on to force the only replay in the history of the cup.

The second match was virtually ignored by the patriotic Egyptian fans and only a small scattering of supporters saw Ndaye score both Zaire's goals.

These brought his total to nine, which remains a tournament record. Who could tell at this stage that the colourful Zairen side with their wonderful skills were, a few months later, going to be so sadly exposed in the World Cup finals.

Ethiopia staged the 1976 tournament, the third time they had been entrusted with the cup. Zaire, their confidence shattered by events in the World Cup, took a single point from group B where Morocco, led by the excellent Faras, looked the most organised side.

In the Addis group it was Guinea, based around the stars of the Hafia club, who looked their only real rivals while Ethiopia failed to make the last four.

For the first and only time the final places were decided by a second series of group matches. In the first of these Zahraoui scored a late winner for Morocco over Egypt while Guinea dropped what was to be a vital point against Nigeria.

Morocco made it four out of four points with a win over Nigeria although they were losing 0-1 up till the last eight minutes. The same day Guinea won a classic match with Egypt 4-2.

Cherif in defence, Papa Camara in midfield and striker N'Jo Lea, the top scorer with four goals, were all first-class players but Guinea went into the last game knowing only a win could give them the title.

Going ahead when Cherif came up to score they came extremely close, Morocco, however, in a typical late charge, equalised minutes from the end to top the group.

Ghana, having failed to qualify for three consecutive tournaments, were hosts in 1978 but they were not generally considered as favourites. They started badly, going behind to Zambia after just eight minutes but recovered to win 2-1.

They went on to draw with Nigeria and beat Upper Volta for a semi-final spot. The outstanding team, however, were Uganda. Given every support by the government of General Amin, they were superbly fit and played at a frightening pace.

They were caught out by Tunisia but recovered to beat Morocco with a terrific three-goal first-half spell that ended the champions' hopes of retaining their trophy.

Tunisia, who were to do so well in the World Cup that year, were a solid team with lots of technical skills but Ghana beat them in the semi-finals with a combination of home support and a great goal from Abdul Razakn who passed three players before beating goalkeeper Attouga.

Uganda, with Philip Omondi scoring his fourth goal, overcame Nigeria and if anything went into the final as slight favourites. Ghana certainly had not felt happy with their attack.

They had experimented with Afriyie, Quaye and Alhassan at centre-forward and for the final it was Afrique, who had played in three games without scoring, who was given the chance. He returned the selectors faith by scoring a goal in each half as Ghana took the competition for a record third time and with it retained the Abdel Aziz Abdalla Salem Cup for all time.

SIX PAGE WORLD SOCCER SPECIAL ON AFRICA

FROM MARK GLEESON

NATIONS CUP OF AGE

BY BOB PATEMAN

THE Nations Cup came of age in 1980 when Nigeria staged the championship. Determined to build their image as an African superpower, they put on a magnificent show.

The stadiums, built when money was flowing in the oil boom years, were magnificant and enthusiastic crowds packed them for nearly every match. The official total attendance was a record 735,000 and the final was watched by 80,000 fans, thus setting another record.

Nigeria opened with a comfortable 3-1 win over outsiders Tanzania, dropped a point against Ivory Coast but recovered to beat Egypt in their last game.

Over in Ibadan the first two matches ended in draws but in the second stage Ghana beat Guinea and Algeria got the better of Morocco. Although Algeria went on to beat Guinea and top the group, holders Ghana went down to Morocco and out of the tournament.

Three of the four semi-finalists were from North Africa, one of the first signs that the balance of power in African football was going to swing north of the Sahara.

Of the individual stars, Belloumi, the most accomplished African player of the decade, was already shining for Algeria while Egyptian goalkeeper Ikramy was in top form in what was to be the third of his four Nations Cup tournaments.

Egypt actually went two goals ahead in the semi-final but their technically well-drilled defence are always subject to a few crazy moments and first Assad and then Benmiloudi scored. The match ended at 2-2 and Algeria emerged winners of the penalty shoot-out.

At the same time, in Lagos, Nigeria went ahead in the first ten minutes thanks to midfield player Owolabi and they held on, at times rather desperately, to that slender lead.

They were in mauch better form for the final. Odegbami, that great talented winger, scored in the second minute, hit another just before half time and Lagos went wild as Nigeria celebrated a surprisingly easy victory.

Two years later the championships were entrusted to Libya. It was in some ways a strange choice. Libyan teams had not fared well in any African competitions and had a reputation of withdrawing from events for political reasons.

On the other hand, they could offer the most modern of facilities and for the first time the tournament was played entirely on artificial pitches.

This was one reason, perhaps, why the tournament saw some of the best technical displays ever given by African sides but little excitement and few goals.

Although Libya themselves had no experience of playing at this level they were known to be a physically tough and well-organised side. Indeed the 1980 championship looked most open.

Ghana had been going through a poor spell and the teams attendance was in doubt until the very last weeks, while Nigeria was having problems with many of thestars who had won the cup two years before.

Indeed, of the players that had appeared in the final, only Lawal and Owolabi were included when they started their defence against Ethiopia.

Nigeria won that game 3-0 but lost the second 2-1 to Algeria after being ahead at one point. Even more surprising was their 3-0 collapse to Zambia, who in Peter Kaumba and Alex Chola, had the two most exciting forwards of the tournament.

Four of the six games in the Tripoli group ended in draws, leaving Cameroun, who were to play in the World Cup later in the year, eliminated without losing a game.

Algeria, the other World Cup side, enjoyed a good game with Ghana in the semi-finals but lost 3-2 in extra time. Libya, meanwhile, beat Zambia thanks to two goals from defender Beshari.

The same player struck in the final to give Libya a draw after Ghana had led for most of the match. Extra time brought no further goals and for the first time the final was decided on penalties.

All ten players scored with their first attempts and the competition went to sudden death before Ghana secured an historic fourth victory.

Preparations for the 1984 tournament were the most impressive yet. The whole country was swept with soccer fever and Ivory Coast players were treated like film stars in the weeks leading up to the tournament.

In addition, the success of Cameroun and Algeria at the last World Cup had brought African football to world attention. Perhaps for the first time the rest of the world was prepared to take the tournament seriously.

The weeks leading up to the 1984f tournament saw Togo beat Ghana 3-0 in a friendly match. It was the first indication that the champions were going to struggle and it threw the championship wide open.

Ivory Coast, of whom so much was expected, started the tournament with a good win over Togo but when Egypt beat Cameroun it put them under considerable pressure.

Looking increasingly tense they lost to Cameroun and then went down to Egypt after being a goal ahead. The elimination of the home side had a drastic affect on the attendance.

Just 15,000 fans watched each semi-final and to assure a full house for the final the organisers had to give away thousands of free tickets.

The image of the championship had not been helped by events in the second group. Malawi, the rank outsiders, had a magnificent game against Nigeria, racing to a two-nil lead.

However, their star winger, Msiya, was kicked out of the game and the Nigerians forced a draw. This left Nigeria and Algeria needing only a point from their last game to go through and this they achieved without ever attempting to threaten each others goal.

It was a disgrace of a match and one that brought a heavy fine for both teams. The event was particularly ironic after all the appeals Algeria had lodged when a similar draw had seen them eliminated from the World Cup.

The tournament that had started so brightly was tarnished but, fortunately, we had two good semi-finals to breath life back into it. Egypt went two up against Nigeria and, with the best defence in the tournament, looked to be safely in the final.

Far from it. Goals from Keshi and Bala put Nigeria back in the game and the match went to penalties which the West Africans won. The second match couldn't produce a goal but there was no lack of excitement.

Cameroun and Algeria were, in the view of most people, the best teams on view. Belloumi certainly was the outstanding individual that year and both teams gave a wonderful display.

Again, however, penalties decided the issue and Algeria were eliminated.

The final itself was, in contrast, an anti-climax. Goals from Ndjeya, Abega and Ebongue gave Cameroun an easy 3-1 victory. Cameroun's most famous player, goalkeeper Thomas N'Kono, missed the final.

He had flown to Spain for a club game during the group matches and not returned. His place, however, was filled by Antoine Bell.

And so to Egypt and the 15th edition of the competition. It was a sad Egypt that welcomed the African soccer community. The day the tournament flags were raised several hotels and public buildings had been burnt down in street riots. The soccer team was also in turmoil having passed through a particularly poor spell, and there was some surprise the coach, Mike Smith, had held on to his position.

Things got worse in the first game when a late goal saw them go down 1-0 to Senegal. Memories of the previous tournament with empty stadiums threatened but the Egyptian team suddenly clicked.

The final itself, in the magnificent national stadium, was a good match turned into a magnificent occasion. It was Egypt's day, with the crowd behind them they dominated the match, limiting Cameroun to a few breaks. Abdel Ghani, the most under-rated of the Egyptian players, came the closest to scoring when he hit the post from well outside the area but, for the first time, penalties determined the match.

With the tension mounting we passed from the best of five penalties before Egypt once again became champions of Africa.

FIFTH TRIUMPH FOR AL AHLY

AL AHLY of Egypt became the most successful side in African club history when they clinched their fifth continental club title in December.

Following on their Champions Cup win in 1982 and their three successive triumphs in the African Cup-winner' Cup between 1984 and 19866, the Cairo glamour club captured the Champions Cup with an expectedly easy 2-0 aggregate won over El Hidal, the First Sudanese finalists in the 23-year history of the two African club competitons.

Only Cameroon club Canon Yaounde came close to Al Ahly's formidable record, with three wins in the Champions' Cup in 1971, 1978 and 1980 and one triumph in the Cup-winners' Cup in 1979.

El Hidal, who beat Canon on penalties in their semi-final, never came close to troubling the Egyptians in the first leg in Khartoum, where Al Ahly were marshalled by international defender Rabih Yassin and easily contained the Sudanese attack.

In fact, Al Ahly's goalkeeper Ahmed Choubier was never really into action in a match that will not be remembered long.

El Hidal, who had lost all five previous encounters to Egyptian clubs in African club competitions since 1967, were on the defensive from the start of the second leg at the Nasser stadium two weeks later and conceded an early goal when Hossam Hossan's cross from the left flank was headed into his own net by El Hidal defender Gamal Tsaalab.

The Egyptians, who had won 32 and drawn three of their previous 35 African club ties at home, then survived a close call when Kandoura beat three defenders and shot against the post in a gallant attempt by the visitors at getting back into the match.

But on the stroke of halftime it was all over when Tabou Abu Zeid provided a perfect ball to give the Egyptians a comfortable 2-0 lead.

Al/Ahly played their typically defensive game in the second half to shutout the visitors and win the tournament. There was even time for sentiment 15 minutes from the end when veteran midfielder Mahmound El Khatib, a former African Footballer of the Year, who had been sidelined through injury in the twilight of his career came on to see the game out.

"I am so pleased we can celebrate winning this title at home," he said afterwards. "It is the first time in years that the Champions' Cup has been won in front of our home fans." He announced his retirement after the game again.

In spite of high admission prices, way above what most Egyptians earn a month, some 70,000 excitable home fans watched the game, including Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak, whose late arrival held up the start of the match.

Al Ahly: Choubier, Ibrahim Hassan, Sedqi, Saleh, Yassin (Saad 65), Mayhoub, Abouradi, Horabi, Abu Zeid, Hossam Hassan, Shawki (El Khatab 75).

El Hilal: Your, Tsaalab, Adam, Tinga, Awny, Sobhy, Mangisto, Kandoura (El Bakr 65), Walid, Idriss.

Referee: M Larache (Morocco).

PREVIOUS WINNERS

1964 Oryx Douala (Cameroon); 1966 State Abidjan (Ivory Coast); 1967 TP Engelbert (Zaire); 1969 Ismaili (Egypt); 1970 Asante Kotoko (Ghana); 1971 Canon Yaounde (Cameroon); 1972 Horoya (Guinea); 1973 AS Vita (Zaire); 1974 CARA Brazzaville (Congo); Yaounde; 1979 Union Douala (Cameroon); 1980 Canon Yaounde; 1981 Jeunesse Tizi Ouzu (Algeria); 1982 Al Ahly (Egypt); 1983 Asante Kotoko; 1984 Zamalek (Egypt); 1985 Royal Armed Forces (Morocco); 1986 Zamalek.

GOR Mahia became the first Kenyan club to win one of Africa's two continental competitions when they beat Esperance of Tunisia on away goal rules in the African Cup-winners' Cup final.

The East African glamour club, making their return to international competition after a two year ban when several of their players viciously assaulted the Sudanese referee at a Champions Cup tie against Zamalek in Egypt in 1984, surprised their North African opposition with a 2-2 away draw in Tunis in the first leg, before sealing the win on away goal rules with a 1-1 draw in the return in Nairobi.

In so doing, they became the first club to win the Nelson Mandela trophy. In 1986 Al Ahly of Egypt completed a hat-trick of triumphs in the competition to earn the right to keep the General Mostapha trophy and CAF were forced to buy a new cup for the competition.

Gor, coached by Dane Jacky Johnson, elected to go onto the attack from the outset in Tunis and then stunned the home crowd with a goal before half time through midfielder Abbas Magongo.

It took two controversial penalties from Tunisian international Nabil Maaloul to put the home team ahead in the second period, but Gor kept coming at them and Peter Dawo scored his ninth goal of the tournament in the final minute to give the Kenyans a stunning away draw.

But with Esperance defenders Khaled Ben Yahia and Boauan and striker Feddou back from injury or suspension for the second leg, Gor were not going to have it all their own way.

Peter Dawo netted in the 20th minute to give Gor the lead on aggregate, but Esperance equalised through Ben Baba with 20 minutes left. A late assault on goal by the Tunisians was not enough, though, and with Esperance complaining, justifiably, about Cameroon referee Alex Hioba, Gor clinched a historic victory.

Gor coach Johnson has since been suspended by CAF for insulting the referee during the second leg.

PREVIOUS WINNERS

1975 Tonnere Yaounde (Cameroon); 1976 IICC Shooting stars (Nigeria); 1977 Enusus Rangers (Nigeria); 1978 Horoya (Guinea); 1979 Canon Yaounde (Cameroo); 1980 TP Mazembe (Zaire); 1981 Union Douala (Cameroon); 1982 Arab Contractors (Egypt), 1983 Arab Contractors; 1984 Al Ahly (Egypt); 1985 Al Ahly; 1986 Al Ahly.

ETHIOPA won the East and Central Africa Challenge Cup soccer tournament for the first time in Addis Ababa after a dramatic final against defending champions Zimbabwe. Deadlocked at 1-1 after extra time, both teams then converted three of their mandatory five penalties before a capacity 40,000 crowd.

Tension reached fever pitch as the shootout became a sudden death test of nerves and the occasion proved too much for Zimbabwe defender Edward Muchongwe who shot wide from the spot.

Up stepped Ethiopian Dagnatchew Demissie to blast the ball past pint-size goalkeeper Japhet Muparutsa and give his side a surprise victory in the 14-year-old competition.

Defeat was a bitter pill for Zimbabwe to swallow as rugged midfielder David Mwanza had given them a 19th minute lead when Gabre Haile equalised.

The visitors also had the disadvantage of playing the last 22 minutes with only 10 men after defender Simon Mugabe had been sent off for arguing with the Zambian referee.

Despite this blow the pysically stronger and quicker Zimbabwe continued to dominate their opponents, who had not competed internationally for more than a year.

Biggest surprise of the two-week competition was the failure of Kenya, desperate for a morale boost before flying to Morocco for the finals of the African Nations' Cup finals, finished third behind shock Group A winners Zanzibar and Ethiopia.

Unpredictable Zambia slumped 4-0 to Uganda — a side they had whipped 5-0 in Lusaka a month previously in an Olympic Games qualifying match. The KK XI then needed to beat Zimbabwe to reach the last four but could manage only a 2-2 draw in the northern city of Asmara.

Malawi, another side who were expected to make an impact, withdrew when national football chief Kumichongwe died while watching his team playing Zimbabwe.

GROUP A
Ethiopia 0 Tanzania 0; Kenya 0 Zanzibar 0; Ethiopai 0 Zanzibar 0; Kenya (1) 3 (Doublas Mutua 20 pen, Wilberforce Mulamba 50 pen, Henry Motego 70) Tanzania (1) 2 (Bushiri Ali 25, Peter Mhina 52); Ethiopia 2 Kenya 1; Zanzibar 2 Tanzania 0.
GROUP B
* Zimbabwe 1 Malawi 1; Uganda 4 Zambia 0; Zimbabwe (1) 2 Uganda (1) 2; Zimbabwe 2 Zambia 2.
* Malawi withdrew due to death of an official.
SEMI-FINALS
Zimbabwe 1, Zanzibar 0; Ethiopia 3, Uganda 0.
THRID PLACE PLAY OFF
Uganda 2, Zanzibar 0.
FINAL
Ethiopia 1, Zimbabwe 1 after extra time (Ethiopia won 4-3 on penalties).
PREVIOUS WINNERS
1973 Uganda, 1974 Tanzania, 1975 Kenya, 1976, 1977, Uganda, 1978, 1979, Malawi, 1980 Sudan, 1981, 1982, 1983 Kenya, 1984 Zambia, 1985 Zimbabwe. No competition in 1986.

ALGERIA: Mouloudia d'Oran have moved to the top of the First Division, one point clear of Ain M'Lila after the 18th round of the championship.

BURKINA FASO: African Nations Cup finalists Nigeria travelled to Ouagadougou for a friendly tie against Burkina Faso as part of their build up for the finals in Morocco. The teams played out a goalless draw.

CAMEROON: Unfancied teams hold the sway in the race for the championship. Union Douala have 20 points from 15 games in the lead, tied with defending champions Tonnere Yaounde, the country's glamour side, lie five places from the foot of the table.

GABON: After 10 rounds of the new season, Union Sportive Mbila Nzambi lead the First Division table with a 100 per cent record. AS Nzambi are three points behind, with defending champions FC 105 Libreville in fifth spot on 11 points.

GHANA: Champions Ashanti Kotoko have been suspended from African soccer by CAF for one year and denied the right to play home fixtures for three years after the African Champions semi-final tie against Al Ahly of Egypt.

Fans invaded the pitch and besieged Kumasi stadium for hours after Al Ahly beat Kotoko 2-1 on aggregate to win through to the final. Algerian match officials were treated for injuries after supporters attacked them and four players and officials from the Egyptian side were also hurt.

The Ghanian Football Federation had also been fined 3,000 US dollers. Al Ahly's midfielder Badr Ragab was also suspended for three African Cup games for inciting trouble during the clash.

LESOTHO: Royal Lesotho Defence Force have won the championship by a narrow margin from defending Matlama.

But the popular Maseru-based club will still compete in Africa, after winning the Independence Cup.

They also reached the final of the traditional end-of-season Top Eight Cup, but were unlucky to lose to Linare 1-0.

MALAWI: Civo United won the Malawian Super League by a handy four points from closest rivals and Central African Club Cup.

MOROCCO: An away draw at formidable Royal Armed Forces gave Wydad Casablance top spot in the championship race.

BY ARTHUR ROTMIL

FRANZ UN

"THREE months before West Germany host the European championship finals criticism of team chief Franz Beckenbauer and his team is gathering momentum.

The December tour of South America which brought a lucky draw with weakened Brazil thanks to a last minute equaliser by Stefan Reuter and a 1-0 defeat by world champions Argentina was greeted with mixed feelings.

Beckenbauer was forced to leave out regulars like Rudi Völler, Thomas Berthold and Klaus Allofs who were not released by their foreign clubs, plus Hansi Dorfner, Uwe Rahn and Wolfram Wuttke who were injured. Other candidates were needed to help the Olympic XI in their qualifying tie with Greece.

Thus Franco Foda, 21, (Kaiserslautern) a defender, Christian Hochstätter, 24, (Borussia Mönchengladbach) a midfielder and strikers Jürgen Klinsmann, 23, (Stuttgart) and Frank Ordenewitz, 22 (Werder Bremen) were newcomers in the 18-man party.

They all played in both matches either from the start, or as substitutes.

Even before they tackled a rebuilt and experimental Brazilian team, Beckenbauer said: "The trip is already a success.

Despite the altitude, heat and jet lag my squad's conduct is exemplary. Results are unimportant. I am more concerned with the development and progress of our side."

"Kaiser" Franz expressed "satisfaction" with the performance against Brazil, although this was slated by critics. The defeat against Argentina he described as "nothing to be ashamed of".

Less generous were the Bundesliga managers who nearly all condemned the tour with adjectives like stupid, idiotic and irresponsible. "They claimed it put the players under too much physical and psychological strain and that, through the absence of the top men, had no value in terms of preparation for the European championships.

Beckenbauer was particularly upset by the biting comments of former club mate and international colleague Paul Breitner, now a newspaper columnist and his greatest critic.

"Paul, as a former player, should know better and realise what we had to put up with. He doesn't seem to show any understanding," said Beckenbauer who continually referred to his team as a "strengthened under-21 side."

Of course the experts were hoping for more positive signs. When the Germans tackle the European Championships they will be expected to display more initiative and more aggression, not to mention technical ability.

They will have to try to dominate the opposition and not just hold them off.

This side is not the 'superteam' of 1972 (European champions) or 1974 (world champions), but at full strength the West Germans should play a leading role in the finals.

After the Mexico World Cup Beckenbauer demanded more

CROSS BO

JORGEN SPARWASSER'S defection, nearly 14 years after he scored the most famous goal in East German football history, upset officials back in East Berlin deeply, writes BOB VAUGHAN.

That was clear the moment a formal statement of condemnation was issued about the 1974 World Cup star's decision to stay in the west after competing with a team from his old club, Magdeburg, in a veterans' tournament in Sarrbrucken.

Under the headline "Team-mates betrayed" the East German news agency ADN set out the official line in direct terms: "Forces hostile to sport used Magdeburg's participation in a tournament in Saarbrucken as an opportunity to recruit Jurgen Sparwasser.

"The player's action represents a betrayal of his team-mates. Such machinations put a burden on the sports relations between German Gymnastics and Sports Confederation of the GDR and the sports federations of the Federal Republic and stand in the way of further developments in this field."

Not one word of gratitude for the way in which Sparwasser put East Germany on the soccer map in 1974; not only with the goal that beat West Germany in the World Cup finals in Hamburg but in master-minding Magdeburg's success a few weeks earlier in winning the Cup Winners' Cup.

That remains the only East German trophy in the European club world.

But then, Sparwasser had not shon much gratitude to East Germany, either. Other East German players who have fled to the West — such as Jurgen Pahl, Norbert Nachtweih and the late Lutz Eigendorf — have been careful to steer away from political controversy.

But they were young enough to carry on their careers. Sparwasser, now 39, was not constrained by ambition.

In newspaper, magazine and television interviews he pulled no punches about life as a star footballer in East Germany.

His historic goal, he says, earned a host of invitations to state sports festivals and television ran clips of the goal over and over again.

But little else. Sparwasser says: "Beating West Germany was worth a bonus of the equivalent of £800. It wasn't enough for a colour television but it was enough for a fridge."

East German players, he says, earn salaries equal to the wages they would receive in the professions they study.

As a qualified mechanic, Sparwasser was earning £300

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UNDER FIRE

ball-playing, than fighting qualities. There is now a healthy competition for places. Some of the regulars can no longer think they have a "season ticket" for the national team. But, especially in defence, Beckenbauer must still find the right blend.

Up front the blond newcomer Klinsmann has developed into a potent rival to Völler and Allofs. Further experiments are not being ruled out, though priority must be the creation of harmony and teamwork.

Beckenbauer's problems can best be gauged by the low opinion the Germans themselves currently hold about their own players.

In the half-yearly rankings issued by the magazine Kicker *not one Bundesliga player was rated as "world class". In the position of defensive midfield* Kicker *could not find a single player worthy of the accolade "international class."*

Before the European finals the national side face a four-nation tournament with Argentina, the Soviet Union and Sweden in Berlin on March 31 and April 2. They will then play Switzerland on April 27 in Kaiserslautern, a farewell match for Bernard Dietz in Duisburg on May 10 and Yugoslavia in Bremen on June 4.

BORDER

salary early in his career which had risen to around £400 when he retired. And there were no bonuses for match wins or championships.

Sparwasser says: "East Germany pampers its Olympic champions. They receive gifts such as cars, privileges not available to other citizens.

"But soccer is a second class sport. You can hear East Germany's Olympic champions telling the western media how well they are treated. But football players find it a struggle."

The final straw for Sparwasser was not a sporting rebuff, however, but a family upset. Sparwasser's daughter, Silke, wanted to study to become a dentist.

Member

She was told that the only way she could allowed to continue her studies was to join the Communist Party.

Sparwasser says: "I didn't want that. I have been a member since 1971, but I joined of my own free will.

"The decision to defect was based on my daughter's situation. She might have joined one day but she did not want to be forced into it."

Silke and her boyfriend then applied for permission to leave East Germany . . . which was refused.

It was then that Magdeburg invited Sparwasser to join a team to play in the west, at Saarbrucken, in a veterans' tournament at the start of January.

Sparwasser said yes. At the same time, his wife applied for — and was granted — permission to visit an aunt in West Germany.

Sparwasser says: "The authorities do not usually allow husbands and wives to travel west at the same time . . . for obvious reasons.

"But no-one noticed that we would be travelling at the same time."

The rest is clear cut. With his wife in the West, Sparwasser walked out on his team in Magdeburg and went to a police station to formally claim asylum.

Back in East Germany, his daughter and her boyfriend were questioned for 12 hours by security officials and threatened with expulsion from their apartment.

Sparwasser hopes they will be, in due course, be allowed to leave.

In the meantime he has probably made more money from talking about his career in the last few weeks than he received in all the years building it up!

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ITALY LOSE PLUM DRAW

by BRIAN GLANVILLE

SO Hans Bang-Bang Bangerter, The Swiss Man, as UEFA NEWS so quaintly calls him, is on his way, after all those controversial years as secretary of that body. How appropriate that he goes out with a Bang-Bang, and not with a whimper, as T.S. Eliot never said; the consequence of The Strange Draw in Dusseldorf.

Of course, the whole thing fizzled out in muted anticlimax; don't they always, where UEFA are involved? This time, it was an eight-year-old child who took the rap; Christian Stielike, son of the formidable West German defender Uli, who for some strange reason was deputed to take the balls out of the transparent urn when the Championship draw was made.

It was the Corriere Dello Sport of Rome, the daily paper for which I have the honour to be a representative in England, which broke the strange story; thanks to the work of an amateur cameraman, who had hired his machine just to film the draw.

Draw

A young Italian, domiciled in Dusseldorf, he provided pictures which showed quite clearly that, when it came to drawing Italy's number, little Christian took out a ball, put it on the back of the hand of Bangerter, seated beside him, where upon Bangerter swiftly muttered a few inaudible words.

At this, the child picked up the ball, now lying on the table, and dropped it back into the urn; totally unacceptable procedure in terms of any such kind of draw.

He put in his thumb and pulled out a plum . . .

Well, to be more exact, the poor little fellow plunged both his hands into the urn, eventually produced another ball, rubbed it between both hands, and presented it to Bangerter. The number on it was 2, which meant not only that Italy had to play in the tough Group 1, but that in its opening match, it must meet West Germany.

Corriere Dello Sport's revelations were followed by others from the Italian television network, RAI, showing that Christian Stielike had done much the same thing with the ball for Spain; that is to say, he had taken out a ball, dropped it back, and produced another.

Again, highly irregular procedure. Uli Stielike, his father, complained that the child had not been adequately briefed, and that he was in a state of extreme distress, having just learned that his brother was dying.

The matter was raised with great restraint and decorum, by the Italian delegation which went to UEFA's meeting in Monaco, the following week. UEFA brushed it aside, saying that if anything had gone amiss, it was simply the fault of the child.

Police

Who knows? Any draw which pits England against Holland in a city as close to the Dutch border as Dusseldorf scarcely seems manipulated. One would have thought that any manipulated draw would have gone to almost any lengths to avoid such a potential conflagration. The West German police who kept such good order among England's aggressive fans and the native nut cases who yearned to give them battle last September, in the same city, must already be summoning up their water cannon, CS Gas and rubber bullets, in preparation for the fray.

Draws, for World Cups and the rest, are strange, suspect, things. I remember, as long ago as 1962, Danny Blanchflower, Northern Ireland's World Cup captain in 1958, drily remarking how Brazil, who had already been seeking accomodation in Vina del Mar, in Chile, were drawn, precisely in Vina del Mar.

Into retirement, Bang-Bang Bangerter takes with him a puzzle and a mystery I should like to see elucidated. In 1973, as we all know so horribly well, UEFA's Disciplinary sub committee held a strange, perfunctory, inadequate investigation in Zurich into the attempt of Dezso Solti, a Hungarian domiciled in Milan, to bribe a Portuguese called Lobo to favour Juventus against Derby County in their European Cup return game in Derby, in the semi-finals.

Scarcely had the smoke cleared and the dust settled than good old Bang-Bang had sent Juventus a letter, thanking them for their co-operation and absolving them. Did he have authorisation form the UEFA Executive? On what grounds did he find Juve purer that the driven snow? Perhaps we'll never know.

Juventus

We DO know, however, that a few years later Keith Botsford, my *Sunday Times* co-investigator, and I found in Holland a letter signed officially on behalf of Juventus by Solti, the man whom Boniperti, their president, had categorised to me as "a madman going around." Some madman. UEFA never did anything about that letter.

That UEFA meeting in Monaco postponed till May at the earliest but probably till June any decision on whether to re-admit English clubs to European competition.

Behind this decision, it seems, was the insistence of the new Sports Minister, Colin Moynihan, itself seemingly based on the disturbances at Highbury when Arsenal played Millwall in the F.A. Cup at Highbury.

The Sports Minister is, governmentally speaking, a figure who sits below the salt; in Italian parlance, *un illustre sconsciuto*, a famous nobody. Moynihan at least can point to a distinguished athletic career, a university boxer as well as a coxswain. That doesn't mean he has shown the slightest knowledge of football.

What happened at Highbury that afternoon was appalling and alarming, and the attempts of Ted Croker, the F.A. Secretary, to minimise was throughly ill judged. But it was also, in European terms, profoundly irrelevant, and Moynihan's public utterances were in context, inept.

Millwall, and Millwall's fans, are, in the first place, a very special case. As my own Deep Throat on the Clock End terracing, among the Millwall fans, assured me, beyond the fact that the "disturbances" were of relatively minor dimensions by comparison with the worst of what happens, Millwall's fans' vendetta is not against opposing supporters by and large, but with the police. It was with the police that the Millwall supporters were ferciously embattled, it was when a single policeman was left exposed that a huge, black fan hurtled down the terraces to assault him, duly to be arrested. I understand that it's been alleged that one particular policeman drew his truncheon and laid about him earlier on, that Millwall have demanded to see the police video, so far without success (a situation which may well have changed by the time you read this.)

But my information tells me most of those fans he saw embroiled with the police had come in so late that it is doubtful if they either saw or knew the alleged incidents.

That Millwall's programme should subsequently tell their fans, "You were magnificent!" was outrageous. That Ted Croker should suggest that whenever 40,000 are gathered together there will be incidents was quite crass. But since Millwall, alone of all the London League clubs, have never yet got into the 1st Division in 100 years' history, let alone into Europe, makes what their fans do a marginal matter.

This is not to suggest that English club fans, by and large, have earned their ticket back into Europe. What seems so ludicrous is that what happens at our domestic games, not to mention what occurs at England's matches abroad, should be used as a criterion for the clubs' re-entry.

Violence

Violence has scarely diminished among the roughneck fans. Ask anybody who was at Scarborough when Wolves played there at the start of the season, or who was unlucky enough to be caught on a tube with those West Ham fans, after the game at Shepherd's Bush against Queens Park Rangers.

Violence has diminished in the stadia themselves because police work is so good. Making such formidable use of closed circuit television, showing their customary courage — notably denied to their counterparts abroad — the English police by and large have subdued the hooligans: inside the grounds. But talk to any civilised fan who frequently goes on the terraces in different stadia and he will

ONE unhappy man . . . Italian manager Azeglio Vicini (third from the right) at the Europe Championship draw, surrounded by Sepp Piontek (Denmark), Miguel Munoz (Spain) and Franz Beckenbauer (West Germany).

tell you a chilling tale of violence in the back streets and elsewhere.

He would certainly not give Liverpool's fans the clean bill of health they are accorded in *You'll Never Walk Alone*, The Official Illustrated History of Liverpool FC, by Stephen Kelly, one of those Who He? jobs in which the production and pictures are excellent but the text quite pitifully inadequate.

Nostalgia

Published by Queen Anne Press at a very reasonable £12.95, the book evokes nostalgia with its fine array of photos, but Mr. Kelly's flat prose cannot compensate for the fact that he's plainly no more than a passionate fan.

So much is omitted, so much inadequately dealt with. It is essentially a spectator's, newspaper reader's, view of this great club. Bill Shankly, a fascinating, controversial and ultimately, perhaps pathetic figure, with nothing in his life but football, and nothing to live for when it had gone, is most superficially presented.

There isn't a line about the profound change in tactics which took place in 1973 when the Boot Room hierarchy met to decide just what should be done, after Red Star Belgrade had beaten Liverpool in the European Cup, home and away.

Then it was that Liverpool's ruling junta decided that they must eschew traditional British methods, going instead for patience, gradualness and tactical cunning. How well it has worked, and how it has survived the long ball idiocies of the past few years!

Writing, for example, of the 1950 F.A. Cup Final, when Liverpool lost 2-0 to Arsenal, Mr. Kelly says nothing of the great furore over Alex Forbes' early, painful foul on Billy Liddell, reckoned to be Liverpool's most dangerous man, a foul which virtually put him out of the game and crippled Liverpool's chances, causing J.P.W. Mallalieu M.P. to write in the subsequent number of *The Spectator*, "Lucky Arsenal? No, just a little dirty."

★ ★ ★ ★

GOOD OLD English fudging and compromising put an end to the wrangling over Robert Maxwell and his attempt to involve himself with Watford, but it was a messy, disturbing affair, and a number of people are left with egg on their faces.

Regulation 80, which already seemed quite specifically to prevent anyone controlling more than a single club, was boosted at the extraordinary general meeting of the League Clubs, but by a surprisingly tight majority, while Maxwell was allowed to keep both Derby and Oxford United, of which his son Kevin is now Chairman.

Unless the League wanted to enter the quicksand of retrospective legislation, there was very little choice. Philip Carter, League President, was not wrong to emphasise that the pass was virtually sold before he ever took office, Maxwell having already been allowed in clear breach of Regulation 80 to acquire Derby when he already had Oxford.

But Carter's own behaviour has been hard to fathom. If, as he insisted, he and David Dein had every right to make a deal with Maxwell (whereby he was allowed to have Watford if sold Oxford) how come they let the Management Committee overturn it? And surely, once they had done so, it was a resigning matter? In effect, the President had been seriously defied.

CARTER . . . compromise.

CLUB FOCUS ON NAPOLI

MARADONA . . . THE KEY

BY KEIR RADNEDGE

ONE CLUB, at least, would be more than grateful to know that an extended seeding system is being considered for the European Champions' Cup

Napoli ended last season with such high hopes. The Italian championship was theirs for the first time. Victory in Europe was expected to follow, almost by right.

With the world's greatest player, Diego Maradona, anything else was unthinkable.

Instead the frist round draw provided not some anonymous part-time minnows but Real Madrid. And when it comes to European ambition, Madrid are something extra special. As Napoli found out. And were knocked out.

Now Napoli can claim more than two years' unbeaten service at the top of the Italian league. Maradona and Co appear as securely on their way to the championship as Liverpool in England. Again the talk is all about the Champions' Cup — next season.

But Napoli should be warned. Next season the first round of the Champions' Cup opens with the first legs as early as September 7 to avoid clashing with the Seoul Olympics (the second legs are on October 5). That spells trouble for all Italy's prospective representatives.

Few countries begin their season as slowly as the Italians. In August, instead of the tough round of tournaments which Spanish, German and Dutch undertake, the Italian clubs warm up with 'easy' walkovers against regional league and youth teams.

The European competitive swing is a big shock to the system, coming right on top of the start of the Italian campaign.

Napoli may again run the risk of being caught cold. It's almost part of their history — looking right back to their original European debut, made in one of the most unlikely places — at Bangor in Wales, in the 1962-3 Cup-winners' Cup.

They were expected to win easily, with a team featuring Italy right-winger Amos Mariani and Argentine forwards Humberto Rosa — a new signing that summer from Juventus — and Juan Carlos Tacchi.

But, in keeping with the tradition of a club whose teams have promised so much over the years and produced so little when it mattered, they struggled. The first leg saw Bangor collect a spectacular 2-0 victory. But those goals were not quite enough in the San Paolo stadium in Naples.

Goals from Mariano and Tacchi turned the tie around before Bangor pulled one back early in the second-half through McAllister. It was not until the 84th minute that Giovanni Fanello scored the goals which brought Napoli level on aggregate through a 3-1 win.

Nowadays Bangor would have gone through on the away goals rule, but the early regulations merely sent the teams onto a play-off. Highbury was the venue where two goals from Rosa earned a 2-1 victory.

Brinkmanship was the keyword in the second round, too. Again Napoli needed a play-off to beat Hungary's Ujpest Dozsa. The quarter-finals against OFK Belgrade also went to a third match. But this time Napoli's luck ran out. OFK won 3-1 and went on to lose to eventual winners Tottenham in the semi-finals.

The season ended in further disappointment. Seven Napoli players were reported to the federation for doping offences in a 1-0 win over Milan. But such was the attitude at the time that only four — goalkeeper Pontel, defenders Molino and Rivelino and centre-forward Tomeazza — were suspended and then only for three weeks. Napoli's form then collapsed and they were duly relegated!

Napoli have done little in the intervening years to ever threaten to become a force in European competition. They have never reached a final and only once a semi-final.

That was in 1976-7 in the Cup-winners' Cup when Napoli beat Bodo Glimt (Norway), APOEL Nicosia and Slask Wroclaw — hardly the toughest sequence — on the way to semi-final defeat at the hands of holders Anderlecht.

A Napoli team which starred ex-Inter full-back Tarcisio Burgnich, World Cup midfielder and later general manager Antonio Juliano and £2 million world record signing Beppe Savoldi lost 1-0, 0-2. Napoli's winning goal in front of their own fans in the San Paolo was defender Giuseppe Bruscolotti — who is still there, at 36.

In the meantime, however, Napoli have never come any closer to European glory. Even Maradona's presence has yet to work a miracle for them. Last season they lost in the first round of the UEFA Cup to French club Toulouse. Napoli lost on penalties and it was Maradona who missed the vital spot-kick. Napoli won 1-0 at home (goal by Carnevale) then 1-0 away and 4-3 on penalties.

The Societa Sportivo Calcio Napoli s.p.a was founded in 1904 and entered the Italian first division in 1929. They were relegated in 1942 and came back up in 1946.

Since then they have been relegated on three further occasions. So until recently the main moments for celebration were the promotion campaigns of 1949-50, 1961-62, 1964-65, plus triumphs in the Italian cup in 1962 and 1976, the Cup of the Alps in 1966 and the Anglo-Italian Cup in 1975 (Napoli beat Southampton 4-1 in the final).

Napoli also featured in the first Anglo-italian Cup final, where they were 3-0 down at home to Swindon when crowd trouble forced the 79th-minute abandoning of the match.

Over the years Napoli have spent heavily trying to keep their volatile crowds happy. In the late 1960s they bought Omar Sivori from Juventus and Jose Altafini from Milan and finished second to Milan — their best-ever domestic placing until last season's league title.

Not only did Napoli win the championship for the first time last season, they became the first team since Juventus 26 years ago to secure the league-and-cup double, beating relegation-bound Atalanta easily by 3-0, 1-0 in the two-leg final.

But it was the league title which mattered most. Fans staged incredible celebrations included a parade with 300 musicians and 200 Sardinian donkeys and a fireworks display on Vesuvius.

Before one of the decisive final games against outgoing championsJuventus, 30 'magicians' were allowed on to the pitch to 'bless' it with incense and fans along one side of the jammed-packed 85,000-capacity stadium unfurled a 90-yard long banner of Napoli's blue and white colours.

The key to is all, of course, was the world record £5 million signing of Diego Armando Maradona in 1984 from Barcelona where he, like Terry Venables more recently, found he could not cope with the perpetual political in-fighting and the insatiable demands of president Jose Luis Nunez.

Maradona returned from Argentina's 1986 World Cup triumph in irrisistible form. He top-scored with 10 goals in 29 games, conjuring some of his goals out of nowhere to inspire his team-mates with his club just as he had his team-mates with his country.

SALVATORE BAGNI . . . proving Napoli are no one-man team.

THE COACH

OTTAVIO BIANCHI. Aged 44 (born October 6, 1943). Bianchi is a players' manager rather than a media man. In his playing days he was an honest, hard-working wing-half who started in the second division with his home-town team of Brescia in 1960. He played a key role in their 1964-65 promotion campaign and was so impressive in his first season in the first division that Napoli bought him to run the midfield engine-room behind their big-name newcomers, Omar Sivori and Jose Altafini. Bianchi moved on to Atalanta in 1971, to Milan in 1973, to Cagliari in 1974 (in exchange for the veteran World Cup goalkeeper Enrico Albertosi) and then retired in 1977 after two seasons with SPAL of Ferrara back in the second division where he had begun. His coaching career began in the third division with Siena in 1978-9. He then moved briefly to Mantova and Triestina before bringing Atalanta up from the third division to the second in 1982 — an achievement which was soon forgotten since he was sacked eight games into the new season. Bianchi's first top-flight job was with Avellino, whom he joined part way into the 1983-84 season and saved from relegation. The next year he coached Como and was then engaged — surprisingly — by Napoli in 1985. Bianchi, son of a newspaper compositor, took Napoli to third place in his first season and then to the league-and-cup double last season . . . after which he considered quitting to spend more time with his wife Maria and children Camilla, 17, and Tommaso, 13, who still live in the north of Italy. The lure of the Champions' Cup proved too tempting . . .

THE PLAYERS

Claudio GARELLA. Goalkeeper. Aged 32 (born May 16, 1955). One of the personalities of the team. Drives a Maserati and hosts a local television chat-show along with his telegenic wife. Born in Turin and made his first division debut in 1973 with Torino. Moved on to fourth division Juniorcasale and Novara before returning to the first division in 1976 with Lazio. Signed by Sampdoria, then in the second division, in 1978, and then transferred to Verona in time for their 1981-82 promotion campaign. Won the championship with Verona in 1984-5 but missed out on their Champions' Cup campaign after moving to Napoli that summer.

Raffaela DI FUSCO. Goalkeeper. Aged 26 (born October 6, 1961). Came up through the Napoli youth squads. First entered the senior squad at 17 in 1978 but did not make his debut until a 1-1 draw in Pisa in March 1984. Has had two spells out on loan, with Vicenza and then Catanzaro in 1985-6 in the second division.

Giuseppe TAGLIALATELA. Goalkeeper. Aged 19 (born January 2, 1969). Product of Napoli's 'Primavera' youth team.

Tebaldo BIGLIARDI. Defender. Aged 25 (born February 5, 1963). Substituted for Sola in the 72nd minute of the first leg against Real Madrid. Discovered by Palermo and transferred to Napoli in the summer of 1986. Useful tennis player!

Giuseppe BRUSCOLOTTI. Full-back. Aged 36 (born June 1, 1951). Napoli's most experienced player with 380 league matches to his name at the start of the season. Bruscolotti is the one survivor of the Napoli team which reached the semi-finals of the Cup-winners' Cup in 1977 before losing to Anderlecht. Joined Napoli from second division Sorrento in 1972 and has been a first-team regular ever since.

Ciro FERRARA. Right back. Aged 21 (born February 1, 1967). With three caps for Italy. One of Italy's most promising defenders, who made his national tean debut in the 3-1 win over Argentina in Zurich in June. Napoli youth product who also had a baptism of fire in the league when he made his debut in a 0-0 draw against Juventus in 1985 when he was only just 18. Tipped to be Italy's right back at the 1990 World Cup finals.

Moreno FERRARIO. Centre-back. Aged 28 (born March 20, 1959). Has 300 league matches to his credit since joining Napoli from Varese in 1977. Cornerstone of the double-winning defence last season. Photography is his hobby.

Massimo FILARDI. Full-back. Aged 21 (born December 20, 1966). Signed from Varese in 1985.

Giovanni FRANCINI. Left-back. Aged 24 (born August 3, 1963). With six caps for Italy. Expensive summer signing from Torino since he is rated the 'new Cabrini'. Appropriately for a defender his star is Leo (the lion). Made his Italy debut in the as a substitute for Cabrini in a 3-2 European qualifying victory over Switzerland in Milan in November last year.

Alessandro RENICA. Defender. Aged 25 (born September 15, 1962). Sylvester Stallone fan who was on the receiving end of a knock-out blow early this season in the 1-0 defeat at Pisa when he was struck by a coin thrown from the crowd as the players left the pitch at half-time. The match was awarded 2-0 to Napoli by the league's disciplinary committee. Began with Vicenza and joined Napoli from Sampdoria three years ago.

Salvatore BAGNI. Midfield. Aged 31 (born September 25, 1956). With 41 caps for Italy. Effervescent midfield player who has been an Italian national team regular since the autumn of 1983 despite a quick temper which has earned several cautions and suspensions. Began with fourth division Capri, made a reputation with Perugia between 1977 and 1981 and then spent three years with Internazionale. Tried to escape being transferred to Napoli in 1984, making him one of the very few players ever to say they did not want to play alongside Maradona. Eventually Bagni agreed reluctantly to the transfer and has stayed for the football even though his luxury villa has been burgled three times since he moved to Naples. Often described by Maradona as "the most important player in the team because of the support he give all the others." Made his Italy debut against Holland in the 1981 Gold Cup tournament in Montevideo, Uruguay, and scored one of his most memorable goals in the 2-1 victory over England with a swirling shot which deceived Peter Shilton in Mexico City in 1985. Was thrilled at selection to play for the Rest of the World in the Football League Centenary match at Wembley. Want to turn to coaching when he retires.

Fernando DE NAPOLI. Midfield. Aged 23 (born March 15, 1964). With 17 caps for Italy. One of the starts of the Italian team which finished runners-up to Spain in the 1986 European under-21 championship. Between the semi-finals (in the spring) and the final (in the autumn) de Napoli squeezed into Italy's senior World Cup squad in Mexico ahead of experienced veteran Gabriele Oriali. Began with Avellino, transferring to derby rivals Napoli immediately after returning from Mexico. Made his Avellino debut in December 1983 and his senior international debut in the 2-0 win over China in May 1986. Played in all Italy's four matches in the World Cup finals and had to mark Maradona in the 1-1 draw against Argentina in Puebla.

Diego Armando MARADONA. Midfield/attack. Aged 27 (born October 30, 1960). With 60 caps for Argentina. Born Lanus in the district of Beunos Aires. Stands 5ft 6 and weigh 11st 11lbs. His brilliance in the World Cup established his beyond all doubt as the world's No 1 player. His displays in Mexico showed no ill-effects from the nagging knee injury he had suffered when kicked by a hooligan in San Cristobel, Venezuela, on leaving the field after a World Cup qualifier in 1985. Suffered a recurrence of the trouble during a kick-about with friends before the start of the 1985-6 league season but Napoli needed him so an operation was delayed until it was too late for him to do anything other than play on. It would have been too late to regain fitness in time for Mexico but in the event careful rest in between matches and cautious training solved the problem. Maradona duly followed up his Mexican triumph by inspiring Napoli to their Italian appeared three times in England: at Wembley against England in a 3-1 defeat in May 1980; in the Ardiles testimonial (as a guest player for Tottenham) last spring; and, controversially, as captain of the Rest of the World at the Football League Centenary in August. Has a four-year extension to his Napoli contract which will tie him to the Italian champions until 1993 — this ending any vague possibility that he might be persuaded to play for a Football League club or anyone else before he returns to Argentina.

Paolo MIANO. Midfield. Aged 27 (born Jan 20. 1961). New signing this summer from his home-town club Udinese, with whom he played for seven seasons until their relegation this year. Also had spells on load with Genoa and Cavese in the second and third divisions respectively between 1978 and 1980. Jack Nicholson fan.

Rosario PERGOLIZZI. Midfield Aged 19 (born Oct 7, 1968). Napoli youth product.

Franceso ROMANO. Midfield. Aged 27 (born Apr 25, 1960). Under-21 international. For many experts Romano was the key to Napoli's championship win. At the start of last season they were clearly short of a player who could bring a little practical thought to midfield. In October, in the fortnight set aside for in-season transfers, Napoli paid second division Triestina £450,000 for Romano and he proved an instant success. Began with Reggiana, moved to Milan in 1979 but was discarded as a failure in 1983 and picked up for next-to-nothing by Triestina. Prefers to play on the left side of midfield where he is best placed to support Maradona.

LSOLA. Midfield. Aged 28 (born Mar 5, 1959). Well-suited to appear in this tie since his favourite actor is Harrison Ford of Star Wars fame! Born in Milan and played most of his career in the second and third divisions before joining Napoli in 1986 from relegated Bari (where he played alongside Gordon Cowan and Paul Rideout.)

Franceso BAIANO. Winger. Aged 20 (born Feb 24, 1968). Napoli youth product who has this summer returned to the club after a season on loan with Empoli.

CARECA (Full name: Antono Oliveira Filho). Centre-forward. Aged 27 (born Oct 5, 1960) with 38 caps for Brazil. Joined Napoli in a £3 million deal earlier this summer. Began his career with Benfica a minor club in Brazil's Campinas state. Was signed by Guarani and helped them win the Brazilian championship, under current national team boss Carlos Alberto Silva, when still only 17. Made his international debut in a 1-1 draw against Czechoslovakia in March 1982 but missed the World Cup that year because of an injury in training in Spain on the eve of the finals. Was then sold to Sao Paulo. Made World Bup amends in superb style with his leadership of the Brazilian attack in Mexico two years ago when he scored five goals, including two against Northern Ireland. Careca was 25-goal top scorer when Sao Paulo won the 1986-87 Brazilian national championship and he scored a vital goal in the final against . . . his old club, Guarani. He was Brazil's Sportsman of the Year in 1986. Was a disappointment as Brazil's Sportman of the Year in 1986. Was a disappointment as Brazil crashed to Chile in the first round of the South American championship in Argentina last summer but has developed an explosive partnership with Giordano and Maradona in the Italian league.

Bruno GIORDANO. Centre-forward. Aged 31 (born Aug 13, 1956) with 13 caps for Italy. Highly controversial centre-forward who joined Napoli in 1985 after spending all his previous career with Lazio. 'Lost' two years out of his career when he banned for his involvement in the notorious betting-and-bribes scandal of 1979. The suspension almost certainly cost him a place in Italy's victorious 1982 World Cup-winning squad as well as many more than his 'mere 13 international appearances — the first of which was as a substitute for injured Francesco Graziani in a 1-0 win over Spain in Rome in December, 1978. Giordano was top league scorer with 19 goals in 1978-79.

Andrea CARNEVALE. Centre-forward. Aged 27 (born Jan 12, 1961). Scorer of eight goals, several of them vital in the title run-in, last season. Was infuriated when Napoli then signed Careca but finally agreed grudgingly to stay with the club for at least one more season. Made hs first division debut with nearby Avellio in 1980 and joined Napoli in 1986 from Udinese.

SERVETTE HAVE NEW TEAM BOSS

SWITZERLAND

ONE of Switzerland's most famous clubs, Servette of Geneva, start the second phase of the championship with a new team manager. Jean-Claude Donze, who recently resigned from FC Sion, has taken over at the club which has debts estimated at about £2.2 million.

Nonetheless, president Carlo Lavizzari has guaranteed financial support which will allow Servette to continue as a professional outfit. Donze has replaced Thierry de Choudens, curiously enough also a former goalkeeper, who gave up his post because he felt he didn't have enough experience at top level. He will carry on in charge of the youth side.

It remains to be seen whether Servette have more luck with a new team boss than FC Zurich who earlier this season engaged the former German international Timo Konietzka in place of the hapless Austrian Hermann Stessl. Zurich were then in ninth place, thanks to superior goal difference, but under Konietzka finished bottom and must now play-off against relegation.

Konietzka began as player-manager with Zurich in 1971, moved then to Young Boys, Grasshoppers, back to West Germany with Hessen Kassel, Bayer Uerdingen and Borussia Dortmund, before returning to Grasshoppers.

Big earners

The most interesting playing newcomer is the Portuguese international midfielder Carlos Manuel 29, who joined Sion from Benefica. Carlos Manuel, who scored the goal which beat England in the Mexico World Cup, will be one of the big earners in Switzerland, otherwise he would hardly have agreed to join a club who just missed the championship play-offs and will instead fight to stave off relegation.

The second half of the season starts on March 6.

Another arrival is the Danish striker Lars Lunde 24, who didn't make the grade with Bayern Munich and has signed for FC Aarau. The Danish international has already played here for Young Boys Berne.

ARTHUR ROTMIL

BAD START FOR HICKLESBERGER

AUSTRIA

AUSTRIA'S new team manager Josef Hickersberger began his reign on the wrong foot when his side lost both matches in the four-nation tournament in France, by 3-1 to Morocco and by 2-1 to Switzerland.

Hickersberger, 39, is the youngest national boss in the history of the OFB. He was the assistant to Branko Elsner who resigned following a run of disappointing performances. "Hick", as the media call him, a former international midfielder capped 39 times, will also be responsible for Austria's Olympic team. He has experience of playing abroad, but none as manager.

Many Austrians see in him a type very much like the German Franz Beckenbauer, but there are also warning voices who point to his lack of managerial prowess and speak of an impending "catastrophe". The doyen of managerial of Austrian club managers Ernst Happel thinks that Hickersberger is the right man. He is certainly most articulate and has been writing intelligent contributions to Austrian newspapers.

Added interest

On the transfer market some famous former internationals from abroad are expected to provide added interest in the second half of the season, due to start in March. The former captain of Northern Ireland, Sammy McIlroy 33, has joined Modling who finished bottom of the 12-team first division and will play-off against relegation.

McIlroy, who played for Manchester United, Stoke City, Manchester City, and Bury (Third Division), gained 88 caps and cost the Austrians £20,000. He is the first British pro in Austrian football in modern times, and should add experience to the weak Modling team.

An even more famous star to grace the Austrian scene will be Oleg Blokhin 35, from Dynamo Kiev, the most capped Soviet footballer in history with over 100 appearances in the national team. He signed for Vorwarts Steyr, from Upper Austria, a modest outfit which will be engaged in promotion play-offs in the spring.

ARTHUR ROTMIL

LATTEK QUITS TURNS WRITER

UDO LATTEK, one of Europe's top coaches, has quit . . . to turn soccer writer.

The shoch news of poacher-turning-gamekeeper — or is it the other way around? — was released by Lattek at a time when he had put new life back into Koln and turned them into championship challengers.

Lattek, 53, quit Bayern Munich after last year's European Cup final, disillusioned by the attitude of some of his star players. He was instantly successful as general manager at Koln but now even that challenge has lost it's attraction.

Lattek, the one man to have guided three separate clubs to European trophies, said: "In the beginning at Koln there was alot to do. Now it's got to the point where I come into the office in the morning and have virtually nothing to deal with apart from a few administrative tasks.

"I have no argument with anyone at Koln. I just feel it's time to try a different challenge — so I have accepted an offer to work with the Axel Springer group on a new German sports paper, to be called Sport Bild."

Lattek is not the only big name stepping out of the Bundesliga four and possibly five prominent internationals are expected to join Italian clubs.

Midfielders Wolfgang Rolff (Bayer Leverkusen), Olaf Thon (Schalke) and Uwe Rahn (Borussia Monchengladbach), plus Lothar Matthaus (Bayern Munich) and striker Jurgen Klinsmann (VFB Stuttgart) have more or less agreed terms with new clubs.

Rolff is said to have signed for Avellino in December. Previous discussions failed, but now it appears that financial arrangements have been settled. His contract with Bayer comes to an end in June and the works club would receive £800,000, as specified under UEFA regulations. Rolff has just spent a vacation in Avellino and claims to be "very happy".

Olaf Thon, the most talented midfielder in the Bundesliga, is also "certain" to move to Italy, though the interested club hasn't been confirmed. It is assumed this is Juventus, who are apparently discarding the Dane Michael Laudrup because they need a midfield general to create chances for Ian Rush.

The transfer fee is said to be £1.3 million. Schalke, in financial difficulties, will want to cash in now before Thon's contract expires in 1989. Were he to leave then, Schalke could only hope to collect £800,000. And the player would be entitled to half the fee under the terms agreed with Schalke. Now he can only claim 25 per cent for himself.

Rahn is apparently all set to move to Sampdoria where he would replace the Brazilian Cerezo and link up with his compariot Hans-Peter Briegel. Rahn is expected to earn £333,000 a year clear of tax, but he too is contracted to Gladbach until 1989. Last year the blond schemer-cum-striker nearly went to PSV Eindhoven, but now the Italians are willing to pay £2.3 million for the Bundesliga's 24-goal top scorer of 1987. Borussia are expected to give their approval to the move, otherwise they too, would lose money.

The saga surrounding Lothar Matthaus continues with persistent rumours that he has agreed a three-year contract with Inter-Milan. Matthaus has scored 81 goals in 260 Bundesliga games — remarkable for a midfielder. Bayern Munich consistently deny any move, but it is no secret that he has set his heart on a career abroad.

West Germany's current top striker Jurgen Klinsmann (11 goals at the winter break), is also being touted for Inter.

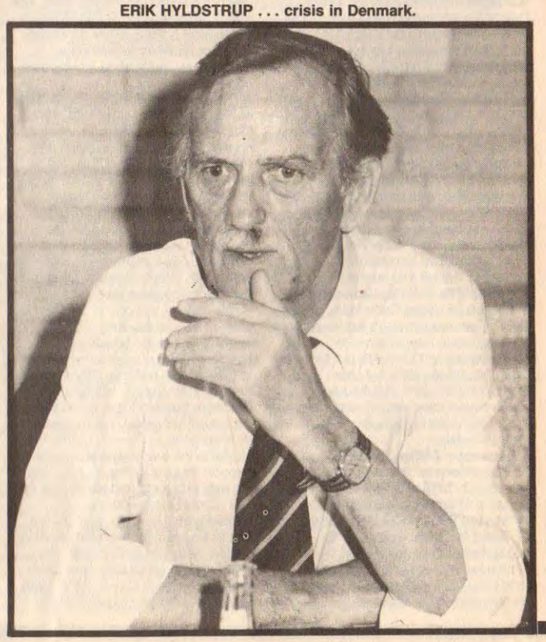
National team chief Franz Beckenbauer is not overjoyed at the prospect of a further player-drain which will undoubtedly add to his problems of creating a settled side.

Bundesliga clubs preparing for the resumption of the championship programme have been busy playing indoor tournaments. For the first time an official indoor championship was successfully organised.

UWE RAHN . . . off to Italy?

DANES BOOST MORALE

ERIK HYLDSTRUP . . . crisis in Denmark.



DENMARK'S young Olympic squad took advantage of the winter break to win the King's Cup tournament in Thailand and boost morale for their vital qualifying group clash against West Germany in Osnabruck on March 30.

Striker Claus Neilsen scored the only goal in the final against an FC Tirol team managed by Ernst Happel. Nielsen is one of a number of young players Sepp Piontek is grooming for the full national side by giving them experience in the Olympic competition, and the Brondby forward is likely to be in the European Championship Finals squad.

So too is Brondby colleague Brian Laudrup, brother of Michael, but he suffered a setback in Thailand when breaking an arm in the semi-final against the host nation.

Beaten

Denmark's chances of reaching the Olympic finals in Seoul depend on victory in Osnabruck after being beaten at home by the Germans and losing a 2-0 over Poland because they fielded Per Frimann when he was ineligable.

The Anderlacht midfielder had taken part in the previous World Cup qualifiers, although he missed the Mexico finals because of injury.

The row over the lost points contributed to the sacking of long-serving DBU general secretary Erik Hyldstrup. The official reason was accusations of disobeying orders over a new fixtures programme in the Danish domestic league.

With the dramatically increased prosperity of the DBU after the national team's success in the 1980s, a power struggle was perhaps inevitable.

Abroad

As ever, the winter sees more Danes try their luck abroad. Jan Bartram left Silkeborg for Glasgow Rangers, scoring on his debut in Scotland, and 20-year-old striker Alex Neilsen left Naestved for Schalke 04.

But it is Schalke's other young Dane, 19-year-old midfielder Bjarne Goldbaek who is emerging as a surprise cndidate for the European championships squad after a run of impressive performances in the Bundesliga.

JIM HOLDEN

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

The national team took part in the unusual Las Palmas winter break competition and ended up playing East Germany for the wooden spoon. In the first game the CSSR met Finland and lost again! The game with the East Germans was however, won — defender Hasek scoring the only goal after two minutes.

It has been quite a season for Sparta's "Footballer of the Year" — who might have been offside when he popped up to put the ball past 'keeper Rudwaleit.

The bad news for Vitkovice was UEFA's decision to ban Vlk for four European Cup matches. Meanwhile his club has been playing friendlies in France in preparation for the forthcoming quarter-final with Espanol of Spain.

BOB VAUGHAN

ALBANIA

THE Albanian championship continues to be dominated by Nentoti with closest rival Flamurtari five points adrift.

It's tight in mid-table however. Apolonia, the surprise of the current championship, who occupy third place with 20 points, have only three points more than Dinamo, who are 11th.

Great efforts are being made now to enter the top six, because these teams will go on to the matches for the third phase for the campaign, preserving the points of the two first phases.

Draw

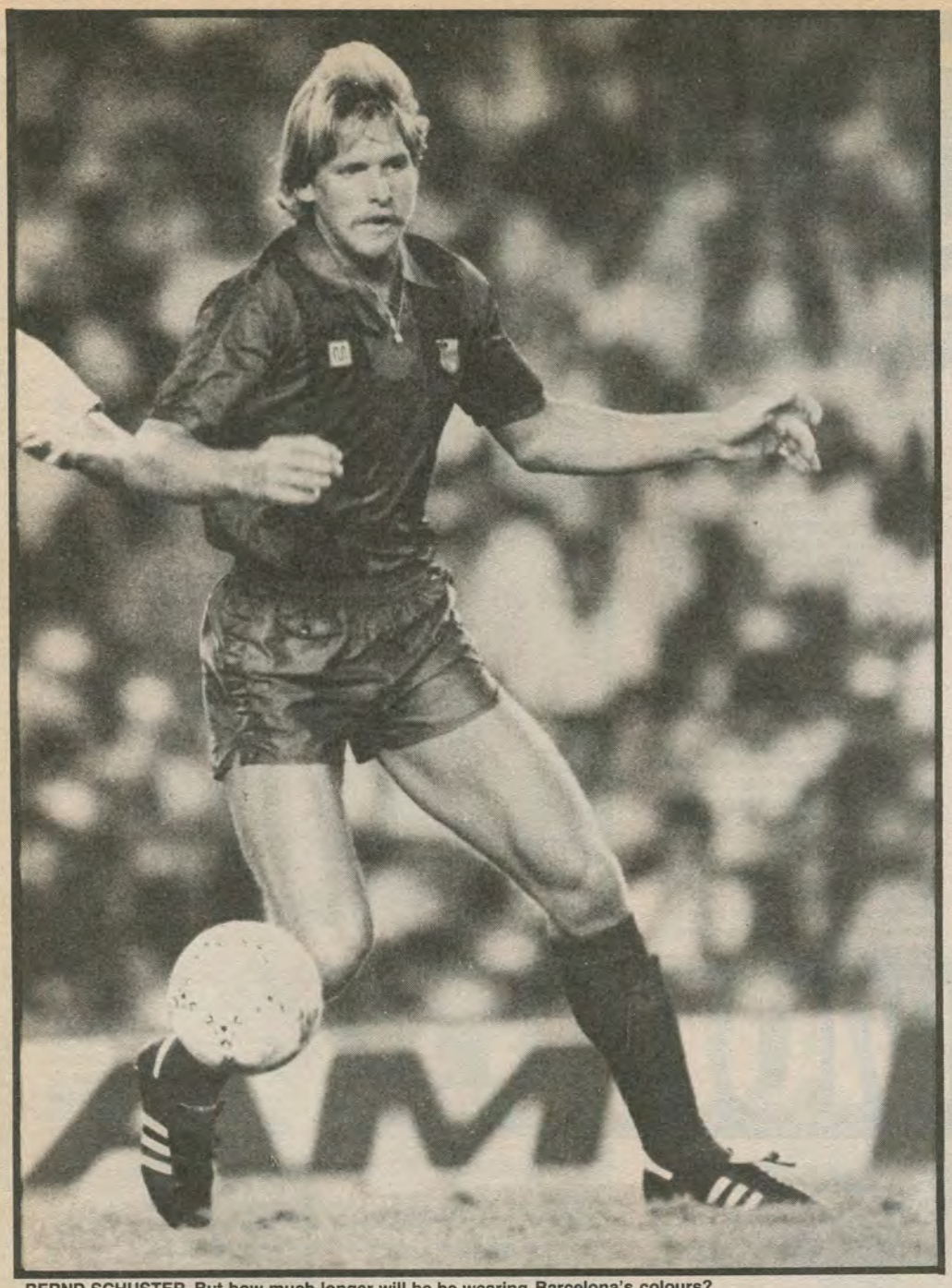
On January 28 (in Kavaja) and February 2 (in Durresi) the Olympic team played two matches with the Olympic team of Romania. These were friendly matches and Albanian coaches used players up to 24 years old.

It is thought that this will be the base of the World Cup team against England, Poland and Sweden.

The Albanian Olympic team was: Shkurti (Besa), Zmijani (Vllaznia), Gega (Partizani), Lekbello (Nentori), Ijadhi (Flamurtari), Josa (Nentori), Demollari (Dinamo), Millo (Partizani), Pashaj (Vllaznia), Kushta (Flamurtari) and Shehu (Partizani).

The first match was won 1-0, with a goal by Kushta in the 70th minute. The second match ended in a 0-0 draw.

GEZIM NUSHI



BERND SCHUSTER. But how much longer will he be wearing Barcelona's colours?

REAL ARE T

REAL MADRID'S shock 4-0 thrashing at home by Real Sociedad in the Spanish Cup semi-finals was overshadowed a day later by new and ever more insistent rumours that Bernd Schuster is to join Madrid at the season's end.

Ever since Schuster and Barcelona called an uneasy truce last summer, there have been reports that the controversial West German midfielder would move to Barcelona's arch-enemies.

Schuster has returned to action this season after a year's absence fighting an unsuccessful lawsuit against Barcelona for breach of contract.

He has been one of their better players in a crisis-torn season and was instrumental in the 3-0 victory over Osasuna, which brought Barcelona through to the Spanish Cup Final.

A claim that Schuster had already settled details of his transfer was broadcast by a Barcelona radio station. The station reported that Schuster, 28, had agreed a three-year contract worth £3.2 million.

The two clubs maintained an icy silence. Jose Mussons and Nicolau Casaus, vice-presidents of Barcelona, commented only that Schuster's contract expired at the end of the season and he would then be free to negotiate whatever deal he could.

At Madrid, secretary Manuel Fernandez Trigo said: "Officially, I know nothing of the matter."

If Schuster does join Madrid, it will be amid a host of misgivings among many Madrid supporters, members and players all too well

FRENCH BOUNCE

THINGS, for our national team, are at least by no means as bad as they seemed in Tel Aviv. That 1-1 draw with Israel saw the French team reach rock bottom, but at least Henri Michel (jeered by Monaco's crowd) had the courage and enterprise to clear out the old guard, rejuvenate the side, and gain a proper reward in the next two fixtures which quickly followed.

As we know, France, in the February mini-tournament, beat Switzerland in Toulouse, and then Morocco in the Final, at Monaco. There, Jean-March Ferreri was the star in midfield, and Yannick Stopyra came back to international form, putting France ahead, and winning the game in the second half, after Larbi had equalised for the Moroccans.

Friendlies are friendlies; our team once used to be known as the King of the Friendly Match; with all this implied so far as the "real" thing was concerned. But the bleak display in Israel made even that old, two edged title seem undeserved.

To pitch a star player like Luis Fernandez out of the side took some courage (he came on after 52 minutes of the Final), but Henri Michel has never been lacking in that. His reward is the emergence of a player such as Metz's 24-year-old sweeper, Sylvain Kastendeuch. Sylvain himself admits that his prodigy has been somewhat slow and obscure, almost stealthy. He doesn't talk much, he says, and nobody knows him well.

As a footballer, at least, they are starting to know him better, now; at a time when the Fernandezes and the Toures may even be slipping gently into the background. He has always preferred to play libero, but it was only with the recent departure of Xappis from Metz that he was able to slip into his favourite position.

He feels that he himself has been "completely liberated" by the move; just as well for a French team which has prematurely lost both Bossis and Battiston, each having "lost" his appetite for international football.

The great thing about Kastendeuch is that he is your modern libero, treading in the steps of Franz Beckenbauer, who invented the role. This has something to do with the fact that until last summer, Metz were using him as an attacking full back, and the good habit died hard. Nor does the team restrict him from his forays upfield. As a teenager, Sylvain was rather small which, he thinks, is why he never won international honours at junior or even at Under 21 level. But here he is, and the future is bright.

Back in the driver's seat in Paris is Gerard Houllier; *faute de mieux* you might say, as the president of Paris Saint Germain, Francis Borelli, did not mask his attempts to acquire a "big name" for the club, not least a reluctant Johan Cruyff.

Erik Mombaerts, bumped off the bench after just a few weeks, finds himself installed as assistant coach. The truth is, as we know, that Paris S-G couldn't afford to get rid of Houllier, who had an iron contract and a very lucrative one.

"The players have a new spirit," said Houllier, shortly before the team took the field after the endless winter break, though with typical honesty he admitted that they had been "tormented" by what went on.

AL MADRID E THRASHED

SPAIN

from Duncan Shaw

aware of his controversial and argumentative record, not only with Barcelona and the West German federation but, before all that, with Koln even before he left for Spain in 1980.

Italian clubs, including Roma and Juventus, have been linked with Schuster.

But the clue to his future may perhaps have been given away by Schuster's equally controversial wife, Gaby. When asked to comment on transfer rumours, she said: "I can't tell you what's going on. If I did, we wouldn't get out of Barcelona alive!"

Some minor consolation for Barcelona fans in a disastrous season is in reaching the cup final.

They beat Osasuna 0-0, 3-0 (with Gary Lineker rediscovering his goal touch) and face holders Real Sociedad in the final on March 30.

Sociedad stunned Madrid, of course, with a storming second-half display which tore Real's defence into tiny fragments.

Madrid had only reached the semi-finals thanks to one of their typical late comebacks in an earlier round against Cadiz in the Bernabeu.

With just 20 minutes left, Real were trailing 2-1. But then two typically brave headers from evergreen Santillana and a strike by Paco Llorente gave the relieved Madridistas a 4-2 win.

Four days later, Real were a goal down away to Murcia in the league and on the verge of having their lead cut to just two points.

But in the 86th minute, Miguel Tendillo — bought from Murcia in the summer — charged forward for the equaliser.

The following Saturday, Real Sociedad visited the Bernabeu. But what should have been a spectacular clash between the league champions and the cup holders was ruined by an unplayably muddy pitch, which has never been up to scratch since the Madrid club hosted a concert by rock group U2 back in July.

Toshack's Basques were on their way to an important draw until, with half an hour left, Butragueno smashed in the only goal with the help of the post.

And so Real Sociedad fell five points behind the Madridistas, a fate which also befell Atletico Madrid — worried about the possibility of having to sell off foreigners Paolo Futre and Alemao to reduce a massive club debt — when they crashed 5-1 at Bilbao.

Atletico were given an early lead by Futre but were then swamped by Howard Kendall's eager youngsters.

Atletico made a disastrous return to the Basque country just three nights later, going down 3-1 in the cup to a rampant Real Sociedad.

The match was a repeat of last June's cup final, when veteran keeper Luis Arconada was Toshack's penalty shoot-out hero.

In the closing minutes, with Atletico struggling to get back on terms, Arconada did it again, stopping Alemao's weak spot kick.

The agile Basque has saved all four of the penalities awarded against his team this season but was still not recalled by Miguel Munoz to the national team — for which he last played in 1985 — for the friendly against East Germany.

Meanwhile, Real Madrid were progressing to the cup semi-finals with another of their escape acts.

They lost the quarter-final first leg 3-2 at Sabadell and, in the return at the Bernabeu, played awfully.

The modest visitors had five excellent chances to finish off the tie — the clearest two falling to former Atletico Madrid and Spain winger Rubio — but missed them all.

With 13 minutes remaining, Sabadell were cruelly punished when Santillana levelled the tie with one of his legendary headers. In extra time, Real once again snatched victory from the jaws of defeat with a Llorente goal.

The other two quarter-finals saw victories for Osasuna and Barcelona against Second Division opposition.

Osasuna beat Real Madrid's nursery team Castilla — who had earlier knocked out Bilbao on penalties — 3-1 thanks to a hat-trick from Michael Robinson.

Barca beat Castellon 2-0 despite coach Luis being confined to bed with nervous depression.

It's anyone's guess how long Luis will stay in charge at Nou Camp and the situation appears to be more chaotic than ever before.

One day, Artur Jorge is supposed to be taking over, the next it's Johan Cruyff, Howard Kendall or John Toshack.

Also in the running are former Barca stars Carles Rexach — assistant to Luis — Luis Suarez and Jesus Pereda.

Lineker's departure would continue the trend of Britons away from Spain.

Ted McMinn left for Derby the day after helping Sevilla to a 1-0 win over struggling local rivals Betis, a result which helped earn the sack for Betis boss John Mortimore.

PORTO STILL LEAD

PORTUGAL

PORTO are still way out in front in Portugal — with a massive six-point lead over challengers Benfica, writes DUNCAN SHAW.

Porto, of course, are the current holders of the European Cup, the European Super Cup and the World Club Cup.

But these honours have in no way blunted their appetite to regain the Portuguese league title, lost narrowly to Benfica last Spring.

Rabah Madjer has already departed — to Valencia en route to Bayern Munich — but the goals continue to flow, mostly from the new attacking partnership of diminutive youngster Rui Barros and veteran Fernado Gomes.

The first defence to get to grips with this tandem, virtually all season, was that of Belenenses.

Escaped

The only problem for Belenenses was that they themselves couldn't put away any of their five clear chances and so Porto escaped with a goalless draw.

On the same afternoon, Benfica began to get their act together again after the sacking of Ebbe Skovdahl by thrashing Covilha 4-0 in the Estadio da Luz. Rui Aguas led the way with two brave headed goals.

But these are generally bad times for football in Lisbon.

Sporting Lisbon continue to struggle after axing former Spurs boss Keith Burkinshaw and will even have problems in qualifying for the UEFA Cup unless the Paulinho Cascavel/ Tony Sealy partnership starts producing goals again.

UNCE BACK IN MONACO

FRANCE

from Andre Duclos

On the face of it, Paris S-G have done Houllier and the team no service. The secret of his success, according to many observers, when he took over the club a couple of years ago, was his excellent psychological rapport with the players, who responded to him superbly. But what chance has he now when he has been first relieved of his command, then replaced by the youth coach, then reluctantly brought back when everybody knows that Borelli just couldn't find anybody else?

It would need, he admitted, "courage and enormous moral force" to win the fight to stay in the First Division; a far cry from that long, unbeaten run of two seasons ago. Had he himself the same passion for football, he was asked?

"It is more than a passion," he replied, "it's a way of expression. It's a lucky thing, a privilege, to practice this profession. One has an obsessional side. Arsene Wenger said recently, one even forgets theatre, literature, the cinema. Luckily there are holidays, which are partly for all that, as well."

Fiasco

Wenger it was, as we know, who snatched Glenn Hoddle from under Houllier's nose when he unexpectedly became manager of Monaco, having relied entirely on Houllier's ecstatic praise of the Spurs man. Wenger himself had never seen him play.

Perhaps one should add, as a postcript to the Israeli fiasco, that the Bordeaux men had to rush there all the way from Los Angeles, where they had been taking part in a tournament (in which Michel Platini had briefly and brilliantly figured). Hardly the best mental and physical preparation for a match which, after all, didn't really matter. Jose Toure forgot himself and got sent off against the Mexicans of Guadalajara.

Strange situation with Enzo Francescoli at Racing Matra. They are candidates for the Championship, pursuers of Monaco, who rely greatly on the brilliant Uruguayan striker for success. But for months now it has been an open secret that Gianni Agnelli himself came to Paris to settle Francescoli's transfer to Juventus next season.

Playing his cards very close to the chest, Francescoli didn't deny he still wants to leave, but insisted that his contract with Racing runs until 1990. Lagardere, the Matra president, insisted Francescoli, had sworn to him that he had had no meeting with Agnelli.

But money has nothing to do with it, the Uruguayan says. He earns plenty in Paris. But hates playing there.

USSR

THE Soviet international squad, has been wintering, as has almost become customary, at the Italian FA's centre at Coverciano where Valery Lobanovsky has been preparing for the Easter tournament in West Berlin, and the European Championship Finals.

The end result was not a happy one — the Soviets losing 4-1 to Italy in Bari, where Rinat Dassayev was twice badly at fault. Intriguing, perhaps, that the Soviet squad included an interesting newcomer in Shidkov, a goalkeeper signed by Dynamo Kiev from Baku, who has a reputation as a penalty saver having stopped four out of eight spot kicks last season.

Another new name was, Sukristov, from Vilna the up and coming Lithuanian club. Sukristov, 27, is a tough tackler known for his accurate long range shooting.

The full party was: Dassayev (Spartak Moscow), Chanov and Shidov (both Dynamo Kiev); Bessanov, Baltacha, Demianenko, Shmatovalenko (Dynamo Kiev), Bubnov and Khidiatulin (Spartak Moscow); Ratz, Yakovenko, Yaremtshuk, Litovchenko, Aleinikov (Kiev), Zigmantovitch and Gotsmanov (Dynamo Minsk) and Sukistov (Vilna); Zavarov, Belanov and Protassov (Dynamo Kiev), Rodionov and Pasulko (Spartak Moscow).

SWEDEN

GUNDER BENGTSSON, who led IFK Gothenburg to UEFA Cup victory last year, has become the coach of Greek club Panathinaikos.

Bengtsson was wanted by "Pana's" arch-rivals Olympiakos last November, but IFK managed to block that move as the coach still had a year of his contract left. But a lucrative offer from Panathinaikos was too much for Bengtsson to resist, although IFK tried their best to make everyone believe that nothing was going on.

The canny Swedes pocketed £100,000 from Bengtsson's move, although finding a replacement has been hard. After being turned down by Tord Grip, currently the national coach of Norway, IFK have left the reins to Bengtsson's former number two, Kjell Pettersson.

Gothenburg's defence will have a new look this season. Former stoppers Glenn Hysen and Peter Larsson have both left, while goalkeeper Thomas Wernersson and left-back Stig Fredriksson have taken over as directors.

The new stopper duo is formed by Andreas Ravelli (ex-Oster) and Ola Svensson (ex-Halmstad). In goal is the Norwegian international Erik Thorstvedt. Thorstvedt, 25, failed to secure a place at West Germany's Monchengladbach. He is rumoured to earn £50,000 a year, which would make him easily the best paid player in Sweden.

Gothenburg's bid for striker Leif Forsberg ran into trouble when GIF Sundsvall demanded a transfer fee of £150,000. This is, according to Gothenburg, too much as Forsberg is still uncapped.

AIK Stockholm, last season's biggest disappointment in the league, have a new coach in former star forward Sanny Aslund. He was in Sweden's World Cup squad in 1978 and also had a spell in West Germany with Werder Bremen.

LAZAREK SPOILT FOR CHOICE

POLAND

TEAM manager Wojciech Lazarek has been in the post only since August 1986 but in some 18 months no less than 120 players have been called up for the "A", Under-21 and Olympic teams, which must be a record of some sort.

The 120th may be the most significant: Ryszard Cyron, probably the discovery of the season, with 16 goals for Gornik Zabrze, six more than Furtok (GSK Katowice), Lesniak (Pogon Szczecin) and Urban, also a member of Gornik's attack, all on ten.

Meanwhile the FA appointed former national team manager, Kazimierz Gorski, current vice president of the FA, to head a commission to look into the problems football is facing. Further off the field trouble came with the controversial agreement of Gornik Walbrzych to transfer Robert Warzycha to the "big" Gornik in Zabrze.

BOB VAUGHAN

BELGIUM

ANTWERP LOSE THEIR RHYTHM AFTER BREAK

THE SHORT, mid-winter break did nothing to assist Antwerp's championship aspirations. Indeed, George Kessler's shock troops who had maintained an unbeaten record prior to the break must now wonder about the so-called benefits of the "rest period".

The famous port club could certainly have had an easier start to the second phase than a clash with high-flying Mechelen. But both teams were in the same boat so to speak and Antwerp's 2-0 away defeat shows simply that Mechelen had found the break more conducive.

Cushion

Antwerp still enjoyed a two-point cushion at the top but the honeymoon was almost over. The following week, at home to Charleroi, they lost 2-0 again.

Antwerp, it had become apparent had wintered badly; their competitive edge had been blunted and in the space of a week they had squandered a handsome four-point lead.

But while Antwerp pondered over where the magic touch had gone Mechelen, the cup holders and last season's runners-up, but who had started the season relatively inconsistently, emerged into a rich vein of form. A 5-2 win at Kortrijk brought them level with Antwerp.

Among the beneficaries of Antwerp's temporary decline has been Club Brugge, who are the only one of the traditional giants still with a vested interest in the championship.

Brugge, too, had some indifferent results earlier in the season but hung in there and with so much experience, must be a good bet for a title which has been such an elusive commodity in recent years primarily because Anderlecht seemed to have the Indian sign over them.

Brugge began after the restart with a clash, strangely enough, against Anderlecht, whose dreadful form has ensured that sole interest this season lies in the Champion's Cup.

The large crowd in the Olympiapark knew that for once, the match, in terms of championship aspirations, was important only for the home side. Anderlecht, nine points adrift of the leaders had no chance of redressing such a huge deficit and had only their pride to play for, that, however, received a further dent when Brugge deservedly won 2-1.

The following week a goalless draw at home to Liege did nothing to boost morale at Parc Astrid and their only consolation now would appear to be that European Cup opponents Benfica are in a similar predicament. A place in the semi-finals is not beyond them, or indeed, Belgium's other European representatives, Mechelen in the Cup-winners cup and Brugge in the UEFA Cup.

Successor

Work has also begun in earnest to rebuild the national team in time for the World Cup qualifying matches, although there is consternation over Guy Thys' successor as team manager.

Thys is due to step down in the summer but will stay on in the role of technical director. But news of his replacement, Walter Meeuws, who was implicated in the infamous bribes scandal which tore the national side apart on the eve of the 1984 European Championships has met with mixed approval.

DE WIT TOLD HE MUST QUIT

ROB DE WIT, Ajax's international outside-left, has retired — at 24. De Wit suffered a stroke in the summer of 1986 which left him partly paralysed. For more than a year he worked on his recovery, and he was planning a return when last month his condition worsened. It was then that he decided to retire.

But for the stroke De Wit would surely have played for Holland in the coming European Championships. His last international, only his eighth, was a friendly against West Germany in May 1986. It was the only chance he got to show the German public his ability.

De Wit was fast and skilful and possessed the capacity to surprise.

"He relies entirely on instinct; if I was a fan I'd go to a match just to watch him," said Wim van Hanegem, himself one of Holland's best left-footed players ever. Now all that remains of De Wit's ambition is the hope that he will be able to play amateur football again.

At least Ajax have the consolation that one of Johan Cruyff's last and best moves at Ajax was to sign Peter Larsson from IFK Gothenburg. Larsson, a 25-year-old sweeper, was voted Sweden's Player of the Year in 1987. Larsson is what Ajax lacks, namely a real defender — that is, someone who has always played at the back, who can mark a man, and who doesn't regard defence as the last line of attack.

Ajax's rivals PSV Eindhoven have dropped their first point of the season, but still lead the Dutch league by a wide margin. PSV drew 2-2 at home to FC Twente, a young team who are playing surprisingly well this season. PSV are so superior in the league that they are bored by the lack of opposition. After winning a close game against Roda, midfielder Soren Lerby said: "At last a real match again. We had to fight for the points this time."

HOLLAND

PSV as good as clinched the league last month, when they beat Ajax 1-0 away. The match was held up for half an hour when Ajax supporters pelted PSV players with fireworks, eggs and fruit.

There have been many recent incidents of fans throwing objects at players. In a lower division match two players suffered head injuries when spectators threw fireworks at them. These actions are probably inspired by the bomb which interrupted the international between Holland and Cyprus in October. Football hooliganism seems to have made a one-way trip from England to Holland.

Another English tradition which has made the crossing is the annual election of the Players' Player of the Year. Ronald Koeman of PSV won the title this year — Barcelona are trying to sign him. Brian Roy of Ajax was voted Young Player of the Year, and Marcel Brands of RKC was Player of the Year in the "first division" (the lower division of Dutch football).

Brand's team, RKC, are even more predominant at their level than PSV are in the premier division. RKC have won their first 21 league matches, and even reached the quarter-finals of the Dutch Cup by beating Excelsior 6-0 away from home. They are so sure of promotion that they are already looking for sponsors to finance their signings for the premier division.

Other clubs are also looking to next season. Roda JC announced that it will replace its current managerial team, Rib Baan and Rob Jacobs, with VVV Venlo's manager Jan Reker. When Baan heard this he immediately resigned. PEC's manager Co Adriaanse also resigned on hearing that PEC would not renew his contract. Theo Laseronis will take over at PEC next season.

Willem II of Tilburg gave their manager Piet de Visser a lifetime contract.

De Visser says: "If no top club wants me, I'll turn Willem into a top club." He is doing just that: Willem II are third in the premier division and were recently voted Club of the Year.

BULGARIA

THE surprise of the close season is the sacking of team manager Hristo Mladenev who appears to have been made the scapegoat for the failure to qualify for Euro '88.

His successor, Boris Anguelov, a former Lok Sofia player, immediately departed with a squad of 17 for a couple of friendlies in the United Arab Emirates. Several regulars in the international team were not selected. On the other hand four Lok players were! The Bulgars went two behind in their first match but recovered to win 3-2.

In the annual Nehru Cup in India "Bulgaria" met the USSR Olympic side. Usually the FA have sent the Olympic team but in view of the forthcoming qualifying tie for Seoul, the Soviets found themselves taking on Trakia! The club side lost 1-0 but proved too strong for China and won 2-1.

Two clubs preparing for the second half of the season had a shock to find they were booked in the same hotel! The compromise was a good one, a hastily arranged friendly. Lok Sofia beat Slavia 2-0.

BOB VAUGHAN

MA-GI-CA

"CAN anyone stop them?" is the cry as Napoli continue their march onwards, laying waste to anyone who challenges their superiority at the top of the league table.

It's all down to the Ma-Gi-Ca attack — Maradona, Giordano and Careca.

New Brazilian Careca is now scoring the sort of goals which made him so popular during the 1986 World Cup Finals in Mexico.

He's scored a total of eight in the league so far, putting him up near team-mate Maradona who still retains his position as leading goalscorer.

Careca's ambition this season is to win that title, as well as the league of course, then next season, he's set his sights on the Champions Cup.

Maradona has scored 12 league goals — four from the penalty spot — and Giordano is also doing well on seven goals.

This year's miserable early exit from the Champions Cup to experienced Spaniards Real Madrid was unfortunate.

In the eyes of Europe, Napoli lost some credibility against an almost invincible Real, but next season, they hope to prove their worth as one of the greats of Europe — on entertainment value, they certainly merit a high placing.

One of the emerging star teams with their open, fluid football are Milan.

Their philosophy of allowing the ball to be played rather than closing down in typical defensive style has given us some fine displays.

Juventus versus Milan was a prime example. Juventus didn't play badly, it was just that Milan had the good fortune to have European Player of the Year Ruud Gullit and captain Franco Baresi.

A Gullit header was the only goal of the match, while Baresi headed off the goal line.

Juventus were disgraced on their home pitch and Milan gained two valuable points.

Gullit is one of the few players keeping pace with the magical Napoli trio. He's scored seven so far but blotted his record when he was sent off in a 1-1 draw at Ascoli.

Little Sampdoria, having done so well to hold second place in the league for a long while, have slipped to fourth place.

The deciding match was Sampdoria versus Napoli in the middle of January. Played in filthy conditions, the pitch was almost totally waterlogged and perhaps unfit for play.

Sampdoria pushed forward and created a number of opportunities for their star striker Gianluca Vialli but he couldn't finish them off and it was left to Maradona to snatch a goal in the dying minutes to win the match.

Vialli was, of course, under the spotlight recently when Real Madrid made a reputed £10 million offer for him.

An undoubtedly talented forward and one of the mainstays of the national team, even he would surely admit that £10 million is a ridiculous amount to pay for one man.

Rising star in the league is Paul Elliott who, at the moment, sits at the top of one newspaper's classification for best centre-half ahead of Italian national team member Riccardo Ferri.

ITALY

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KEIJO LEAVES LAHTI

FINLAND

KEIJO VOUTILAINEN, perhaps the most successful Finnish coach ever, has left Kuusysi Lahti.

Under Voutilainen's eight-year spell Kuusysi won the league three times, the Finnish Cup twice and were in the quarter-finals of the Champions' Cup in 1985-86.

There were rumours of a rift between the players and the coach. When Voutilainen launched a stinging attack in the local press towards Kuusysi's transfer policy, the board told him that he could leave.

Voutilainen was almost immediately hired by relegated Koparit, the club he coached in the late 1970s. Kuusysi's new supremo is Antti Muurinen, from second division Kontula.

How will Kuusysi fare without The Wizard? Kuusysi were recently involved in a minor transfer-war with their local rivals Reipas. They first lured Under-21 defender Mika Viljanen from Reipas, who then hit back in spectacular style by hiring Kuusysi's midfield star Markus Tornvall.

"Reipas is not a nursery club for the others. We aim to rule this town and showed that we mean business with the purchase of Tornvall," said the president of Reipas.

The most exciting new signing for the coming season was made by Pori, who managed to beat Soviet red tape to snap up international forward Yuri Gavrilov. He played in the 1982 World Cup finals and has scored 98 first division goals for the Moscow clubs Spartak and Lokomotiv.

MIDDLE EAST

IN THE Saudi Arabian league programme Al-Ittifak of Damnan upset favourites Al-Hidal to capture the 1987 General League championship.

Al-Hidal were champions in 1985 and 1986 and, with seven internationals in their ranks, were strongly tipped to make it a hat-trick of titles. But they finished runners-up in the four-team championship round ahead of Al-Nasr and the unfashionable Al-Taei.

The reigning champions found little comfort in the King's Cup either. Having reached the final in convincing fashion, Al-Hidal were defeated 1-0 by Riyadh neighbours Al-Nasr.

However, the blues did manage to get their name on one trophy during 1987 They exacted sweet revenge over newly-crowned champions Al-Ittifak in the final of the Federation Cup; winning 2-0.

Saleh Al-Naema, Al-Hidal's international centre-back was named 1987 "Player of the Year".

A 4-1 DEFEAT away to Al-Ahli has severely dented the 1987-8 title aspirationds of UAE champions Sharjah, who slipped from third to seventh place in the league after six rounds.

Abdul-Razak Ibrahim (3) and Medhi Ali scored for Al-Ahli with Ibrahim Saleh notching the champions' face saver.

Al-Ain retained top spot with a 3-0 victory away to new boys Rassalkhaima; international striker Ahmed Abdullah (2) and Ali Yasser were the scorers.

Al-Kheleej moved up to third when Abdullah Al-Wan's goal gave them both points in their home encounter with Al-Sha'ab.

Al-Wasl, last year's runners-up, started the campaign badly, but have moved into contention with four successive victories.

Strikers Fahd Khamis, Zouher Bahit and Nasser Khamis have hit form in recent weeks and each notched a brace of goals in their club's sixth round 7-0 destruction of Ittihad Kalba. Fahd Adbul Rahman got the other.

Kalba just managed to avoid relegation last season, but might not be so lucky this term. They currently hold up the table with just one point from five games.

Emirates, the other promoted team, scored twice through Walid Al-Badi and Saleh Al-Seloumi to register their first win of the season at the expense of Al-Nasr. They remain in tenth place, two points out of the relegation zone.

Al-Shabab completed the round with a 3-1 victory over Al-Wahda. Khamis Saad (2) and Khaleb Abdullah scored for the winners. Mutar Mahmoud got Al-Wahda's consolation.

AL-JABLA, from the sea-side town of Al-Latakia, are the 1987 Syrian league champions.

It is Al-Jabla's first honour in domestic competition; their previous best league performance was in 1984, when they finished runners-up to Al-Karama.

The first division was reduced to 11 clubs when Al-Jaisch, the club of the Syrian Army, was disbanded just before the season was due to begin.

There was a scramble for the highly rated Al-Jaisch players and Al-Jabla secured the services of Raged Khalil, Malek Al-Shakkouhi and Issam Zeino; all stars of the Syrian national team.

Throughout the season, Al-Jabla battled for supremacy with Al-Karama, the 1984 champions, and by the time the last game came around just two points separated the two teams.

Al-Jabla were top with 40 points, ahead of Al-Karama, and had a superior goal difference. However, if the leaders lost their last match against Al-Hurriye and Al-Karama defeated Al-Schurta (the police team), the three points for the victory would give the title to Al-Karama.

Although they began nervously against Al-Hurriye, a Hamoud Al-Bedi goal earned Al-Jabla a 1-1 draw and the league championship.

And it turned out that they had nothing to be anxious about as Al-Karama were thrashed 4-0 by the police team.

The final records of Al-Jabla and Al-Karama were:

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al-Jabla	20	12	5	3	35	4	41
Al-Karama	20	10	8	2	28	19	38

Al-Futua were third, eight points behind Al-Karama, with Al-Schurta a point further back in fourth spot.

Newly-promoted Al-Arabi were totally outclassed and failed to win a match; gaining just three points from three draws. They conceded 73 goals in their 20 games and were comprehensively thrashed by Tischrin (2-9), Al-Jihid (2-8), and Al-Hurriye (0-8).

The league's leading goalscorer was Romeo Eskander who hit the net 11 times for Al-Schurta.

AL-ARABI lead the Kuwait General League first division table after seven rounds of competition.

Abdullah Al-Beloushi and Anbar Saeed scored for the leaders in their 2-0 win at Al-Salmiyya, to maintain Al-Arabi's three point break over Al-Kuwait; the army club.

Al-Kuwait stayed in touch with an exciting 3-2 win at home to Al-Yarmouk. Ahmad Al-Farhan, Salah Al-Hasawi and Ahmad Al-Salam netted for the army team, while Basim Al-Hasimi and Imad Al-Bahar replied for the visitors.

Reigning champions Kazma moved up to third spot when a Saleh Al-Masnad goal was enough to gain victory over the visiting Al-Qadsia.

Al-Fahaheel striker Hamad Harbi registered the season's first hat-trick in his club's 4-1 victory away to Al-Nasr. Abdul Aziz Al-Harjeri completed the scoring for Al-Fahaheel. Kaseb Ghafel scored for the losers.

AL-HEKMEH have become the first Lebanese club champions since 1976.

Over the past decade, few championships have been attempted in the war-torn country, and those that have have remained unfinished due mainly to lack of discipline amongst the clubs.

In 1983, four of the top clubs pulled out of the league over dissatisfaction with referee appointments.

Al-Hekmeh, an ignominious club in the league's heyday, secured the title with a scoreless draw in their last game against Al-Jabal.

THOSE Graeme Souness dreams of European glory with Rangers may still be alive — but he can forget the Scottish Cup for another season!

The multi-million pound Glasgow giants, who face Steaua Bucharest this month in the quarter-finals of the Champions Cup, were humbled by Premier Division strugglers Dunfermline Athletic in a fourth round clash last weekend.

Rangers had needed a replay to dispose of little Raith Rovers in the third round and even suffered the indignity of the First Division side equalising at Ibrox before claiming a 4-1 win.

Souness had to dash back from a midweek spying mission to Rumania to be with his charges at Dunfermline but couldn't have been encouraged by what he saw at East End Park.

Dunfermline were a goal up after just six minutes; Rangers then had defender John Brown sent off shortly before half-time; and when Athletic's John Watson smashed home the second after 49 minutes, Rangers were on their way out.

The defeat completed a double that Souness will not remember with relish.

In his first season in charge at Ibrox last year, Rangers were incredibly ousted from the competition by Hamilton.

And in goal for Academicals that day was one Dave McKellar — ironically,the man between the sticks for Dunfermline!

Souness declined to point the finger at any of his players after the shock, which followed the line of national team boss Andy Roxburgh on his return from Scotland's 2-2 draw in Saudi Arabia.

Roxburgh conceded that his team did not live up to expectations but he was angered by criticism that flowed readily after the game.

Elsewhere in the Scottish Cup, Premier Division leaders Celtic were held to a goalless draw by Hibernian, although there were few problems for Hearts, Aberdeen or the Dundee clubs, who all cruised through against lower opposition by identical 2-0 scorelines.

Dunfermline's reward for knocking out Rangers is a fifth round trip to Tynecastle to meet Hearts, whilst Celtic will have to undertake the relatively short journey to either Clydebank or Partick Thistle if they survive their replay against Hibs.

First Division Clyde face the daunting task of a Pittodrie showdown with Aberdeen but there's little doubt about the tie of the round — the derby clash at Dens Park between Dundee and Dundee United.

Rangers goalkeeper Chris Woods . . . no joy in the Scottish Cup.

FOR CLOU

FOR A long time it has been obvious that Brian Clough would never be manager of England.

His controversial style has long since marked him out as the one man the powers-that-be could never allow to hold the reins.

His achievements with Derby and Nottingham Forest have been plain to see. But the manner of that achievement has never made friends in the right places. Clough's blunt, highly-opinionated style has upset too many people over too many years.

Now, it seems, the consolation prize of one of the other home country managements is barred as well, following Nottingham Forest's refusal to allow him a few days off every now and again to manage Wales.

The Welsh badly needed someone like Clough, as successor to luckless Mike England, to generate enthusiasm, interest and sponsorship cash. He was clearly disappointed by Forest's refusal though whether that disappointment will translate into his departure from the City Ground at the end of the season is a matter for doubt.

Perhaps he would not have been so ready to take up the offer were there a realistic chance of challenging Liverpool in the first division.

BRIAN CLOUGH . . . the style Wales wanted.

REST BLOCK OUGH MOVE

by DERICK ALLSOP

But, to all intents that race was over long ago, although Clough and Forest may yet have something to say about Liverpool's domestic domination in the closing stages of the FA Cup.

Forest go to Arsenal in the quarter finals while Liverpool visit Manchester City.

Wimbledon, a side that no team can relish tackling at this stage of the competition, entertain either Watford or Port Vale while in the other tie Luton or Queens Park Rangers meet Portsmouth.

How much is owed to Liverpool's ability and how much to the mediocrity of the opposition has been a matter of dispute since the issue was raised by Bob Paisley, former Liverpool manager.

Paisley, now 69 and an Anfield director, argues that his club's success owes much to the mediocrity of the opposition — "You have to say our current side has been aided and abetted by the poorest First Division I've seen in my years in the game.

"There are only five or six clubs who had the quality to win the title from the outset of the season. I'm talking, besides ourselves, of Nottingham Forest, Arsenal, Manchester United, Spurs and Everton. From that lot I still believe Liverpool's greatest threat will come from Everton.

"Why the standard has dropped so much I can't say. Maybe the lack of European football has taken the edge off First Division competition. One thing is certain, there is no question of Liverpool being complacent about their big lead. It's not over and done with so far as we are concerned.

"Kenny Dalglish's make-up just wouldn't let him think like that. Kenny has a side with a good collective game and one or two exceptional players. Their run is exceptional, too, though I recall a Liverpool side I managed finishing off a season with 28 matches undefeated.

"It's difficult comparing Liverpool sides from different eras. The current team, for instance, will play maybe 48 games in a season. But I recall seasons of 72 matches when we were in Europe."

Liverpool, of course, must wait longer than the rest for the chance to return to Europe. They had a supplementary three-year ban imposed after the 1985 Brussels disaster.

Fan violence permitting, England's clubs will be back next term. But since Liverpool's championship triumph appears inevitable, the representatives of England's return would be the FA Cup winners and, in the UEFA Cup, the League runners-up and the Littlewoods Cup winners.

England's football leaders felt their cause with UEFA wasn't helped by Sports Minister Colin Moyihan, who wrote to UEFA expressing his concern about the hooligan problem.

Six senior West German police officers were at the Queen's Park Rangers v West Ham United FA Cup match to watch their English counterparts in action. They departed saying they were impressed.

The Germans, preparing for this summer's invasion of England fans, saw supporters spill on to the plastic pitch as hundreds with forged tickets filed through the turnstiles. The match was held up for an hour as police — a dozen of them mounted — restored order. A spokesman for the German delegation said: "We were impressed by the discipline shown by your police — and by the fans, too."

The draw for the European Championship has grouped England with Holland, the Soviet Union and the Republic of Ireland, who are managed by Jack Charlton, a member of Alf Ramsey's 1966 World Cup-winning team.

England's current manager, Bobby Robson, said: "A lot of people will look at the draw and assume that England have been lucky. But it's not going to be that easy and if I were to make an extravagant statement to that effect, it would only stoke up the opposition all the more."

The man emerging as the popular choice to succeed Robson eventually is Graham Taylor, who has steered Aston Villa to the top of the Second Division.

Taylor's Villa were not, however, able to check Liverpool's momentum when they met at Villa Park in the fourth round of the FA Cup. John Barnes, Taylor's prodigy at Watford, scored another splendid goal to give Liverpool the lead and Peter Beardsley settled the issue.

For another long-term England managerial candidate, Terry Venables, though, there was humiliation as well as defeat that Cup weekend. Tottenham went down 2-1 away to Third Division Port Vale, a result that did not flatter the 1,000-1 outsiders.

The Venables reaction was to go out and spend almost £1 million on Liverpool striker and Everton's highly-rated reserve goalkeeper Bobby Mimms.

Meanwhile Cup holders Coventry were knocked out by a Watford team showing signs of recovery under new manager Steve Harrison.

Graham Taylor's former assistant took over from Dave Bassett, who parted company with Watford after 236 trying days in charge. He admitted: "I suppose it was never really on here from the start."

Bassett, who led Wimbledon from nowhere to the upper reaches of the First Division, had another job within 10 days. He took over at struggling Second Division club Sheffield United.

WORLD SOCCER DIARY

KEIR RADNEDGE'S EXCLUSIVE GLOBAL NEWS SERVICE

ALTOBELLI IS FINED

MONDAY, JANUARY 25

SWITZERLAND: UEFA name the match officials for the European championship finals. Referees: Brummeier (Austria), Casarin (Italy), Fredriksson (Sweden), Galler (Switzerland), Hacket (England), Igna (Rumania), Kirschen (East Germany), Pauly (West Germany), Ponnet (Belgium), Rosa dos Santos (Portugal), Soriano Aladren (Spain), Thomas (Holland), Valentine (Scotland), Vautrot (France). Linesman: Linesmen: Biguet (France), Blankenstein (Holland), Conceicao Silva (Portugal), Karlsson (Sweden), Kohl (Austria), Longhi (Italy), Midgley (England), Peduzzi (Switzerland), Peschel (East Germany), Petrescu (Rumania), Smith (Scotland), Tritschler (West Germany), Van de Vijngaert (Belgium).

THAILAND: Denmark's Olympic team beat FC Tirol of Austria by 1-0 in the final of the King's Cup in Bangkok. Claus Nielsen scores the winner in front of a 10,000 crowd in the 44th minute and skipper Lars Olsen receives the cup and the £10,000 prize from government Minister Chaovana Na Sylvanta. There are bookings for three Austrians as well as Denmark's Kim Vilfort. In the third-place match, Thailand defeat the Soviet Olympic XI 4-2. Mikhael Morozov and Boris Kavrilov score for the Soviets.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 26

ITALY: Veteran Inter forward Alessandro Altobelli is fined £2,500 by his club for throwing the captain's armband to the ground in disgust on being substituted against Pescara on Sunday . . . officials of second division Brescia open up the stadium to discover the goal posts have been sawn up during the night by fans in protest at recent poor results . . . Alberto Bigon, former Milan player, signs an extended contract to stay on as coach of surprise promotion packet Cesena . . . a Florence court hands out jail sentences of between five and eight months to hooligan fans arrested for fighting last year — but the sentences are later suspended pending appeals.

NIGERIA: Sports Minister Bayo Lawal announces that professional football will be introduced from February, 1989. The military government intends to shortly pass a law to allow the necessary administrative changes. The principal of professionalism was accepted back in 1985 after the setting up of an investigative committee following pressure from players and officials.

SPAIN: National boss Miguel Muñoz names one new cap in his starting line-up to face East Germany in Valencia. That's Luis Lopez Recarte, the Real Sociedad full back. East Germany, a disappointment the previous week in the Maspaloma tournament in Las Palmas, are without injured attacking star, Andreas Thom.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27

BRAZIL: Botafogo vice-president Emil Pinheiro says in Rio de Janeiro that World Cup right back Josimar will not be free to join Dundee United until the summer, after the Rio state championship has been completed. But Pinheiro admits: "The agreement with the Scottish club is 90 per cent settled." Josimar says he is even prepared to give up night-clubing for the chance to play in Scotland. The proposed fee is estimated at £600,000.

GREECE: Hooligan trouble at a cup-tie between AEK and Olympiakos. One fan is stabbed in the neck in fighting on a subway train after the match, and a policeman and a woman passer-by are injured by stone-throwing fans outside the Karaiskaki stadium.

HOLLAND: Veteran national manager Rinus Michels agrees, after all, to take over next season as coach to West Germany's Bayer Leverkusen. Michels had previously turned them down because his wife was not keen to return to living in West Germany. Michels signs a two-year contract after having previously been expected to agree a four-year deal with PSV Eindhoven. Bayer manager Michael Meier worked with Michels during his first spell in the Bundesliga, at Köln.

ISRAEL: Israel and France draw 1-1 at Ramat Gan in front of a 10,000 crowd. Yannick Stopyra scores on the hour for France, Avi Cohen equalises six minutes later.

SPAIN: Spain and East Germany draw 0-0 in Valencia. Baquero and Salinas both have 'goals' disallowed.

TURKEY: Genclerbirligi are banned from European club competition for two seasons as punishment for defying FIFA and the Turkish FA, and playing a match in the Turkish-occupied zone of Cyprus.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 28

WEST GERMANY: Jürgen Sparwasser, most celebrated of East German soccer exiles, lifts the lid on DDR football in a series of articles in *Bild-Zeitung*. He explains why footballers are treated as second-class citizens in East Germany and says that he and his wife decided to escape to the West because East Berlin authorities tried to force his daughter, Silke, to join the Communist Party as a prerequisite for continuing her medical studies.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 29

HOLLAND: Pec/Zwolle beat Den Bosch 3-2 in an advanced league match.

SWITZERLAND: UEFA announce the following preliminary round groups for the 1988-90 European under-21 championship: Group 1: Bulgaria, Denmark, Greece, Rumania. Group 2: Albania, England, Poland, Sweden. Group 3: Austria, East Germany, Soviet Union, Turkey. Group 4: Finland, Iceland, Holland, West Germany, West Germany. Group 5: France, Norway, Scotland, Yugoslavia. Group 6: Cyprus, Hungary, Spain. Group 7: Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Luxembourg, Portugal. Group 8: Italy, San Marina, Switzerland. As usual the groups follow closely the lines of the World Cup draw. One novelty will be the mainstream debut of San Marino, UEFA's newest members.

WEST GERMANY: European championship organisers say they have been swamped by ticket applications. Some 39,000 ticket applications have poured in from Denmark alone for each of the Dane's three group matches. That means a lot of disappointment since visiting teams are restricted to 20 per cent of tickets i.e. around 13,000 per match. The only match unlikely to be a sell-out is the tie between the Soviet Union and the Republic of Ireland.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 30

BELGIUM: New setback for champions Anderlecht and leaders Antwerp. Anderlecht are held at home by FC Liege and Antwerp go down 2-0 at home to Charleroi.

MOROCCO: A shock for Morocco as Tunisia pip them to a place in Seoul. Morocco lost 1-0 in the first leg in Tunisia and can only draw 2-2 at home in Rabat. Khairi (25 minutes) and Krimau (30) score for Morocco, Lotfi Al-Roweisi (18) and Tarak Dhiab (89) for Tunisia.

NIGERIA: Nigeria beat Algeria 2-0 in Lagos to spring an Olympic surprise and qualify for the finals in Seoul. Algeria won the first leg 1-0. Nigeria equalise on aggregate through Ademola Adeshina after 30 minutes then win the tie with a goal from Henry Nwosu six minutes from the end of extra time.

SPAIN: Betis are beaten 1-0 at home by Sevilla in the Seville derby. The match between Real Sociedad and Zaragoza is postponed because of heavy rain.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 31

BELGIUM: Mechelen win 5-2 at Kortrijk to pull level on points with Antwerp at the top and ahead of them because they have won more games (15 to 14). Israeli international Eli Ohana scores twice for Mechelen, the other goals coming from Den Boer, Clijsters and Koeman

GREECE: In a repeat of the hooliganism-scarred midweek cup duel, AEK beat Olympiakos 2-0. Dimitris Pakitikis scores after only 40 seconds and Danish forward Henrik Nielsen grabs the second. Improving Olympiakos slip back from ninth to 11th in the table. A hat-trick by Michael Ziogas brings leaders Larissa a 4-0 victory over Panahaiki and keeps them two points ahead of PAOK, who beat Panionios 2-0.

HOLLAND: PSV thrash Den Haag 9-1. Ronald Koeman and Hans Gillahsu each score twice, the other goals coming from Vanenburg, Janssen, Lerby, Viscaal and Gerets. Ajax win 3-1 away to bottom club Dordrecht but remain five points behind PSV, having played two games more. Wouters, Bosman and Peter Larsson — his first goal for the club — score for Ajax, all in the first half.

ITALY: Goals from Maradona (penalty), Giordana and Careca bring Napoli a 3-1 victory away to Ascoli and edge them four points clear of the field. Second-placed Milan are lucky to draw 1-1 away to Fiorentina through a controversial 74th-minute penalty converted by Franco Baresi. Milan are down to ten men by that stage after the 70th-minute expulsion of Virdis. Ian Rush converts a penalty in Juventus' 4-0 win over the bottom club Empoli.

PORTUGAL: A 100,000-plus crowd in the Stadium of Light see Benfica held 1-1 by Porto, who thus stay seven points clear. Jaime Magalhaes scores a spectacular 19th-minute goal for Porto which Diamantino squares in the 51st. There is hooligan trouble when Porto fullback Inacio is struck in the eye by an orange hurled from the crowd before the game and the kick-off is delayed ten minutes while he receives attention. More hooligan problems, too, in Guimaraes. Vitoria are 1-0 down to visitors Boavista with 17 minutes remaining when the referee abandons the match following a pitch invasion by home fans angry at the decision to disallow an equaliser. There is renewed speculation about the position of Keith Burkinshaw after Sporting Lisbon crash 4-0 away to Penafiel.

SPAIN: Real Madrid push six points clear with a 4-0 win over Cadiz; Hugo Sanchez scores twice after a run of three-goalless matches. Madrid's lead is extended to six points as Atletico Madrid are held 1-1 by Sabadell. In Barcelona, fans demand the resignation of president Jose Luis Nunez during and — especially — after the 1-1 draw against Las Palmas. Midfielder Roberto misses a penalty and Barcelona equalise only in the 87th minute through Raul Amarilla, on as substitute for Gary Lineker. Barcelona are weakened by the suspensions of Schuster, Victor and Julio Alberto.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1

BRAZIL: Pele explains, in a press conference at the Sao Paulo federation offices, why the United States are a better bet as 1994 World Cup hosts than Brazil. Pele says: "A country where many people go hungry, and which has the largest debt in the world, cannot think of spending government cash on promoting a football competition . . ."

HOLLAND: Johan Cruyff, out of work after quitting Ajax, says he would be ready to discuss working for Barcelona — if the Spanish club approached him. Meanwhile Barcelona fans call on president Jose Luis Nunez to quit in the wake of the previous weekend's 1-1 draw against Las Palmas. Coach Luis says: "I have experienced a lot of things in football, but never a situation like this."

ITALY: Gianluca Vialli, star of Sampdoria, says he will have to study carefully details of a reported £10 million bid by Real Madrid.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2

BELGIUM: Wim Jansen quits as coach to Lokeren. He is succeeded by former Polish international, Wlodzimierz Lubanski, a former player with Lokeren.

COLUMBIA: Officials of Deportivo Cali says Verona have made an offer for South American Footballer of the Year, Carlos Valderrama.

FRANCE: Toulouse sees the semi-finals of the Tournoi France 88, a four-team tournament designed to help national manager Henri Michel make constructive use of the winter break. Morocco beat Austria 3-1 and France beat Switzerland 2-1.

ITALY: Paul Rideout, forgotten Englishman in the second division at Bari along with Gordon Cowans, is looking for a move home. Southampton, QPR, Sheffield Wednesday, Middlesbrough and Swindon are all linked with possible bids. . . Felice Riva, controversial one-time president of Milan, is the subject of an arrest warrant issued in Frosinone alleging bankruptcy fraud.

SOVIET UNION: The national team, at a training camp in Italy at Coverciano near Florence, beat the Valle del Servhio amateur team 17-0. Igor Belanov scores six to underline his long-awaited return to fill fitness.

SWITZERLAND: UEFA's disciplinary commission suspend Honved defender Jozsef Fitos for five matches after his explusion in the UEFA Cup third round tie against Panathinaikos. The Greek club's Ionis Kalitskis, also sent off for violent play in the tie, is banned for four games. Also banned for four matches are Lubomir Vlk of Vitkovice, for spitting at an opponent in the UEFA Cup return against Vitoria Guimaraes, and Arno Glesius, of West Germany, after his expulsion against Holland in a European under-21 match.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3

AUSTRALIA: The Australian national team draw 1-1 with the touring Yugoslav club, Dinamo Zagreb, at Olympic Park in Melbourne. A 6,000 crowd sees Zvonimir Boban convert a free kick into a goal in the 40th minute, and then Graham Arnold equalise ten minutes later.

BRITAIN: Mike England resigns as manager of Wales.

ISRAEL: Israel lose 2-0 at home to Rumania in Haifa. Boloni and Ciuca score the goals.

ITALY: Roma fine Rüdi Völler a club record £10,000 for flying home to West Germany the previous week while unavailable to play because of a repetitive muscle strain . . . eleven Modena fans are condemned to suspended jail terms of between two months and two years, after a weaponry was discovered in a fans van travelling to Genoa for a second division game . . . Milan striker Pietro Paolo Virdis is suspended for two games for jostling a linesman.

MEXICO: Mexico beat Guatemala 2-1 in Toluca in the Olympic qualifiers. De la Torre and Flore score in a two-minute spell. Byron Romero Perez grabs a Guatemalan consolation in the last minute.

PORTUGAL: Sporting sack English coach Keith Burkinshaw. The final nail in his coffin was the 4-0 weekend beating at the hands of Penafiel. Antonio Morais, former national team aid, is appointed as new boss at Sporting.

SPAIN: Barcelona are at the centre of transfer rumours: first is the £10 million world record offer made to financially-confused Atletico Madrid for Portuguese star Paolo Futre. Tentative inquiries are also made for John Bosman of Ajaz and Ronald Koeman of PSV Eindhoven. In the other direction, officials refuse comment on London newspaper reports that Tottenham manager Terry Venables has agreed to buy Spain midfielder Roberto . . . in the cup semi-final first leg ties, Osasuna are held goalless at home by Barcelona. Barcelona play it tight, without either Gary Lineker or Bernd Schuster. Coach Luis says they have "been rested for tactical reasons." In the Atocha stadium in San Sebastian, cup-holders Real Sociedad beat Real Madrid with an eight-minute goal from Jose Baquero.

YUGOSLAVIA: Obituary: Marinko Stojakovic, 22-year-old centre-forward of Vojvodina Novisad, a former youth and under-21 international, is killed in a car crash near Belgrade.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4

ARGENTINA: National boss Carlos Bilardo says he hopes to stay in his job until the 1994 World Cup. Bilardo admits having recently turned down a big-money offer from Barcelona. Reports say he was offered a three-year contract worth a basic £1.6 million. . . Hugo Santilli, president of River Plate, says Cesar Menotti, currently with Atletico Madrid, would be an obvious favourite if the former world and South American champions decided not to renew coach Carlos Timiteo Griguol's contract in June.

BRAZIL: The CBF names the 22 players from whom youth squad manager Rene Simoes will pick a party of 18 to visit New Zealand later this month. Star player in the squad is 17-year-old Roberto de Assis Moreira (known as Assis) of Gremio Porto Alegre. . . World Cup rightback Josimar, linked with Dundee United, is loaned by Botafogo to Sevilla for the rest of the current Spanish season. Sevilla have an imports gap following the weekend sale of Ted McMinn to Derby. Botafogo will receive £140,000; Josimar will be paid £45,000 for his three months' work.

HOLLAND: Veteran Belgium World Cup rightback Eric Gerets, agrees a two-year contract extension with PSV Eindhoven.

WEST GERMANY: Bayern Munich say they will not be selling Algerian World Cup star Rabah Madjer, who joins them at the season's end from FC Porto, via Valencia. Barcelona are reported interested in trying to hijack the newly-crowned African Footballer of the Year.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 5

FRANCE: The French national team play their first-ever full international in Monaco, and win 2-1 over Morocco in the final of the Tournoi France 88. In the third-place match Switzerland beat Austria 2-1. French national boss Henri Michel is jeered by Monaco fans for selecting only 'their' fullback Manuel Amoros for the recent trip to play in Israel. Michel and senior officials have just previously had to talk Luis Fernandez out of walking out on the squad midway through the tournament, in his anger at being omitted.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6

ARGENTINA: Guillermo Coppola, business manager of Diego Maradona, says the Napoli and Argentina star will, after all, captain Argentina in a four-team tournament in West Berlin between March 31 and April 2.

SPAIN: Bilbao boss Howard Kendall says he last weekend rejected an offer from Barcelona.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7

ARGENTINA: Racing regain sole leadership thanks to a 3-2 home win over Talleres of Cordoba. Jose Iglesias scores a hat-trick. Previous joint leaders Newell's Old Boys and San Lorenzo are both held to draws — Newell's 2-2 away to Deportivo Armenio, and San Lorenzo 1-1 away to Estudiantes in a fierce match which sees two players from each team sent off. Crisis-hit Boca Juniors

● *Continued overleaf*

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MORTIMORE IS SACKED

● Continued from previous page

take a 2-0 lead away to Union of Santa Fe but are pulled back to a 2-2 after a stormy second half in which three players are sent off.

GREECE: Larissa are held goalless away to Aris but maintain their three-point over AEK and OFI. Olympiakos slip back towards the relegation zone after a 2-0 defeat away to Panionios.

HOLLAND: In the top-of-the-table clash, PSV win 1-0 away to Ajax in a match interrupted for half an hour while debris thrown from the terraces is cleared out of the PSV goalmouth. Fireworks and eggs are among the missiles hurled at Eindhoven goalkeeper Hans Van Breukelen. Trouble begins two minutes after the kick-off and referee Jan Keizer takes the players back to the dressing rooms while the trouble is sorted out. PSV win with a Soren Lerby goal just before half-time.

ITALY: The players' union threatens an all-out strike on March 6 unless the federation rejects proposals to allow a third foreigner next season in the first division and one new-contract foreigner in the second division. . . in league action, little change. Napoli beat Pisa 2-1, Milan beat Cesena 3-0 and Juventus lose 2-0 to Pescara, whom they crushed 6-2 in the cup the previous month.

PORTUGAL: Porto come close to losing their unbeaten record in a goalless draw against Belenenses, whose Bulgarian forward Stoicho Mladenov has a shot cleared off the goal-line just before the final whistle. Benfica beat bottom club Covilha easily by 4-0, with two goals each from Rui Aguas and Mats Magnusson. Sporting Lisbon provide new coach Antonio Morais with a winning start in a 2-1 success away to Rio Ave.

SPAIN: Real Madrid win 2-1 at Gijon to stay out in front. Barcelona, reduced to ten men by the expulsion of Gerardo and having substituted Gary Lineker, forced a 1-1 draw at Sevilla thanks to a last-second equaliser. Betis boss John Mortimore is pushed to the brink of dismissal by a 4-1 defeat at Espanol.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8

BRITAIN: Aston Villa beat French league leaders Monaco (Hoddle and Hateley and Co) 3-0 in a Villa Park friendly.

SPAIN: As predicted, Betis give John Mortimore the sack. He is the fourth manager ousted in Spain this season, after Colin Addison (Celta), Jock Wallace (Sevilla) and Terry Venables (Barcelona). Mortimore says: "I am sad. I was having to rebuild because three or four key players left before I arrived. The club knew that. The problem is, we've had some bad away results." President Gerardo Martinez says: "We're sorry to lose Mortimore. He is not only a fine coach but a gentleman and he has understood the situation." Assistant Pedro Buenaventura takes over as caretaker.

WEST GERMANY: Federation spokesman Wolfgang Niersbach says a record 706,000 tickets have been sold for the European championship finals. This surpasses already the pre-finals sales record of 599,655 set in France four years ago. Sold out are West Germany v Italy, Denmark v Spain, West Germany v Denmark and the final in Munich. These sales figures include full sale of allocations to competing federations.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9

GREECE: Olympiakos and Thijs Libregts, the Dutch national-manager-elect, part company after just 75 days. Club vice-president Stavros Koskotas says: "We agreed to break his contract under friendly conditions." Libregts, who switched to the struggling champions from PAOK earlier in the season, says: "There are cliques within this team which would make life difficult for anyone."

SPAIN: Atletico Madrid president Jesus Gil denies that he has already agreed to sell Paolo Futre to Barcelona. Gil says: "We will not make any decisions about any of our players until the end of the season."

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10

ARGENTINA: River Plate agree at last to settle a financial wrangle with Uruguayan club Defensor over River's signing of Uruguayan World Cup forward Jorge Da Silva. River signed Da Silva from Atletico Madrid and ignored a clause in his contract granting Defensor a share of any future transfer fee. River must now pay Defensor £25,000.

BELGIUM: Rare domestic success for Anderlecht as the league champions beat last season's cup winners, Mechelen, by 2-0 to win the Belgian Supercup. The clubs had drawn 1-1 the previous week. In the second leg the decisive goals for a 3-1 aggregate victory come from De Groote and Grun. Last year Anderlecht lost to Brugge in the Supercup.

HOLLAND: The unhappy saga of Frank Rijkaard ends when the Ajax sweeper signs a two-and-a-half year contract with Sporting Lisbon. The fee is £1.5 million.

ISRAEL: Poland beat Israel 3-1 in Tel-Aviv with goals from Kubicki, Prusik and Kosecki. Israel score first through Ronnie Rosenthal in the 35th minute.

ITALY: First leg matches are played in the cup quarter-finals. Sampdoria beat Ascoli 4-2, Inter struggle to overcome bottom-of-the-table Empoli by 2-1 and the two other ties (Torino v holders Napoli and Avellino v Juventus) end in 1-1 draws.

SPAIN: The newspaper El Periodico quotes Johan Cruyff as saying: "The time I requested to consider an offer to coach Barcelona next season is now over and I have decided to accept. I don't know whether they will call me back in minutes or tomorrow. We still have to negotiate a contract." . . . a full first Division programme is played as part of a scheme to end the season early to help the national team prepare for the European championship finals. Leaders Real Madrid beat Zaragoza 2-1 (goals from Sanchis and Llorente) and there are wins for pursuers Atletico Madrid and Real Sociedad. Barcelona beat neighbours Espanol 3-1 to win their first league match in five thanks to back-in-form Gary Lineker. He scores the first goal in 15 seconds and is fouled so Bernd Schuster can convert No.2 from a penalty . . . The Spanish decision to switch the league programme infuriates the French federation, who use Spanish fixtures for their pools during the French winter break. The French have to scrap an entire week's betting because, they say, the Spanish authorities did not inform them about the fixtures switch.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13

SPAIN: Real Madrid lose 2-1 away to Osasuna and have top scorer Hugo Sanchez sent off — after scoring Madrid's goal.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14

ARGENTINA: Boca Juniors, maintaining their four-match unbeaten revival, beat Racing 2-1 with goals from Alfedo Graziani to knock Racing off the top of the table. Newell's Old Boys overtake at the the top thanks to their 1-0 derby win over champions Rosario Central.

BELGIUM: Upset at Brugge, where the first-team refuses to travel to Holland for a friendly against a minor regional team, Sluiskil. A crowd of around 1,000 are turned away because the Brugge players and management are squabbling over bonuses due for the UEFA Cup win over Panathinaikos. Brugge promise to compensate Sluiskil for their disappointment.

GREECE: Another good day for AEK's Danish striker, Henrik Nielsen. He scores twice in the 2-1 win over Aris. Nielsen is top scorer in the league with 16 goals. Irish striker Paul Bannon scores a hat-trick as PAOK beat Levadiakos 4-1. Olympiakos provide a first win for new coach Pavlos Grigoriades as they beat Verria 2-0 with goals from Isaak Moustakides and Juan Gilberto Funes.

GUATEMALA: Mexico beat Guatemala 3-0 in Guatemala City to complete a 5-1 aggregate victory which takes them into the Olympic Games finals.

HOLLAND: PSV drop their second point of the season, held goalless away to Utrecht in the day's only league game. In the cup Ajax win 3-2 away to Volendam and Feyenoord win 4-0 away to Den Haag.

ITALY: Napoli move five points clear, thanks to a 4-0 win over Avellino but Milan can only draw 1-1 with Ascoli and have Dutch star Ruud Gullit sent off for ironic applause of the referee after only eight minutes. Ascoli's Domenico Agostino is sent off in the 67th minute. Torino are the only team to move up in the table — their 1-0 win over Internazionale in Milan pushing them above Juventus and Verona, who share a goalless draw.

SPAIN: Barcelona draw 1-1 in Valencia despite having Julio Alberto sent off just after half-time.

WEST GERMANY: Bayern Munich beat Nurnberg 3-1 to reach the quarter-finals of the cup. Norbert Nachtweih, Mark Hughes and Lothar Mattaus score the goals. After the match the quarter-finals draw takes place, pairing Bayern with Hamburg.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15

AUSTRALIA: Federation executive director Brian Emery says that Liverpool star Craig Johnston has been invited to play for Australia in the Bicentennial tournament in July against Saudi Arabia, Argentina and Brazil. South Africa-born Johnston once played for Scotland under-21s and has recently featured in the senior England squad without getting a game which would compromise his eligibility for Australia.

BELGIUM: Aad de Mos, successful boss of Mechelen, decides to see out his contract which lasts to 1990 — turning down a lucrative offer to return to his trouble-torn old club, Ajax Amsterdam.

FRANCE: League leaders Monaco travel back to England to beat Tottenham 4-0 at White Hart Lane in a friendly. Tottenham are without Fenwick, Clive Allen and Waddle, all on England duty in Israel. Monaco's goals come from Mark Hateley (two), Fofana and Mege. Glenn Hoddle, captain for the night, hits the bar. Spurs introduce new signing Paul Walsh from Liverpool.

ITALY: Manager Azeglio Vicini includes four new youngsters in his squad to face the Soviet Union at the weekend in Bari — forward Ruggiero Rizzitelli (Cesena), goalkeeper Marco Landucci (Fiorentina) and midfielders Massimo Crippa (Torino) and Luca Fusi (Sampdoria). Given the day off are veterans Salvatore Bagni (Napoli) and Alessandro Altobelli (Inter) . . . Ruud Gullit claims he was misunderstood when he was sent off the previous day. He was merely clapping his hands to encourage his team-mates to concentrate on the game, rather than insulting the referee.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16

ISRAEL: England captain Bryan Robson is injured in training on the eve of the international against Israel.

PORTUGAL: A shock for Porto as the world and European champions are held goalless at home by giantkillers Estoril in a cup fourth round tie.

SCOTLAND: England win 1-0 with a late Gary Porter goal in the quarter-final first leg of the European under-21 championship in Aberdeen.

WEST GERMANY: League leaders Werder Bremen catch up on their one outstanding game, thanks to a 5-0 win over Schalke.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17

MATCH ACTION: Israel and England draw 0-0 . . . Saudi Arabia and Scotland draw 2-2 . . . Greece beat Northern Ireland 3-2 with a last-minute goal from Mitropulos.

HONG KONG: In the semi-finals of the Chinese New Year/Carlsberg Cup tournament, Aarhus beat Lucky Gold Star of South Korea and Hong Kong beat Dalian of China — both by 2-0.

SPAIN: Mallorca beat Sabadell 2-0 in a replayed league match but most attention is focused on Barcelona's 3-0 win over Osasuna in a cup semi-final second leg. Gary Lineker returns to form with two fine goals, both created by Bernd Schuster.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18

FRANCE: Prime Minister Jacques Chirac, in a presidential election campaign speech, says he has "come to an arrangement" with FIFA president Joao Havelange to ensure that France is awarded the World Cup in 1998.

GREECE: An air traffic contollers' strike means the Northern Ireland national squad are temporarily stranded in Athens.

SOVIET UNION: The federation suddenly block Oleg Blokhin's transfer from Dynamo Kiev to the Austrian second division side, Vorwarts Steyr. No reason is given. Steyr say they will appeal to FIFA to ban Blokhin until the matter has been resolved.

SPAIN: A major shock in the cup semi-finals: holders Real Sociedad crush Real Madrid 4-0 in Madrid to reach the final for the second successive year. Jose Maria Baqero, new starlet of Spanish football, scores twice. Sociedad, under John Toshack, win 6-1 on aggregate.

WEST GERMANY: East Germany's most famous soccer exile, Jurgen Sparwasser, joins the Eintracht Frankfurt coaching staff.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19

FRANCE: Prime Minister Jacques Chirac tries to play down his claim of the previous evening that the 1998 World Cup is certain to be awarded to France. In Zurich, FIFA spokesman Guido Tognoni says there must have been a misunderstanding . . . Marseille beat Racing 2-0 with goals from Papin and Cauet.

ITALY: Agent Antonio Caliendo, of the International Public Sport bureau, says the problems with Ian Rush have not disuaded Italian clubs from considering British stars, should the imports limit be lifted the following week from two per team, to three.

SPAIN: Three newcomers, defender Juan Larranaga and midfielder Aitor Beguiristain from Real Sociedad plus Diego Rodriguez (Betis), are in the Spanish squad to face Czechoslovakia. Squad: Zubizarreta, Buyo; Andrinua, Sanchis, Larranaga, Lopez Recarte, Julio Alberto, Rodriguez; Victor, Beguiristain, Joaquin, Senor, Eusebio; Bauqero, Butragueno, Salinas . . . according to a Barcelona radio station, Bernd Schuster has agreed a £3.3 million transfer at the season's end to Real Madrid.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20

BELGUIM: Mechelen stay top after a 2-0 win over Racing Jet.

FRANCE: Monaco draw 0-0 away to Niort but extend their lead to four points because closest challengers Bordeaux lose 2-1 in Toulouse.

ITALY: Two goals from Gianluca Vialli help Italy to a 4-1 victory over the Soviet Union in Bari in a European championship warm-up.

PORTUGAL: Victories for Porto, Benfica and Sporting. Porto stay six points clear of Benfica thanks to a 1-0 win away to Boavista in the Oporto derby. Rui Barros scores the decisive goal.

SPAIN: Barcelona soon forget their cup form as they lose 2-1 at home to Bilbao. Schuster is ineffective and coach Luis substitutes him after Bilbao go 2-0 up. Replacement Francisco Lopez creates Barcelona's consolation goal for Roberto. Mendiguren (19mins) and Uralde (32) score for Bilbao.

SWITZERLAND: Harry Cavan of Northern Ireland is re-elected for a further two years as the British home FA's FIFA executive delegate. Cavan has intimated he intends to retire in 1990.

WEST GERMANY: Koln — held 2-2 at home by Bochum — are shocked by general manager Udo Lattek's decision to quit to become chief football columnist of a new Axel Springer publication, Sport Bild. Koln slip to third, four points behind leaders Werder Bremen and behind Bayern Munich on goal difference. Bayern beat Waldhof Mannheim with goals from Pflugler and Rummenige.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21

ARGENTINA: Newell's and Racing are both held to draws, so Newell's remain one point clear at the top. Further down the table, Boca Juniors move up to 15th place out of 20 with a 1-0 win away to Talleres of Cordoba.

BRAZIL: The storm damage sweeping Rio de Janeiro means postponement of the Maracana derbies between Fluminenese and Botafogo, and Flamengo and Bangu. So little-known Americano, from the city of Campos, lead the Carioca championship thanks to a 2-1 win over Vasco da Gama.

BULGARIA: The season recommences with CSKA Sredets beating Beroe Stara Zagora 4-2 to increase their lead over Vitosha to three points. Vitosha (formerly Levsky-Spartak) are held 1-1 away to Spartak Pleven.

GREECE: Second-placed OFI Crete beat leaders Larissa 3-1 and are now only one point behind. Samaras (seven), Charalambidis (20) and Chilean Jaime Vera (49) score the OFI goals . . . Panathinaikos' Yugoslav star, Velimir Zajec makes a goal-scoring return after four months sidelined by injury, in a 1-1 draw against Iraklis.

HOLLAND: PSV drop another point, this time in a 2-2 draw home to Fortuna Sittard after taking a 2-0 lead with goals from Ronald Koeman. Ajax draw 1-1 away to Twente and remain eight points adrift in second place.

HONG KONG: Hong Kong beat Danish club Aarhus 5-3 on penalties after a 0-0 draw, to win the Chinese New Year/Carlsberg Cup final. In the third-place match, Lucky Gold Star of South Korea beat Dalian of China 3-0.

SPAIN: Real Madrid bounce back from their cup upset to defeat Las Palmas 5-0 in the league and extend their lead to five points as Atletico Madrid are held 1-1 by Betis. Hugo Sanchez scores twice for Real Madrid, one from a penalty, to take his total this season to 21. Coach Leo Beenhakker says: "We had to show what we are made of. That cup defeat by Sociedad was like the end of the world."

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22

MOROCCO: FIFA's inspection delegation begins a fact-finding trip through Morocco to vet facilities in preparation for the June 30 decision on who stages the 1994 World Cup.

SWITZERLAND: UEFA's appeals board rejects leniency pleas from Jozsef Fitos (Honved) and Ionnis Kalitsakis (Panathinaikos) who were banned for five and four games respectively after being sent off for 'extremely violent behaviour' in a UEFA Cup third round second leg tie between the teams on December 12 . . . Swiss first division club Sion agree to release Morocco star Aziz Bouderbala, who has become homesick after prolonged injury trouble. WAC Casablanca, his old club, want to buy him back.

MORE DIARY NEWS NEXT MONTH

DAY-BY-DAY NEWS REVIEW

WORLD SOCCER SPECIAL ON ASIA

RASHEED — THIRD STRAIGHT SUCCESS

IRAQ: Arab champions, Rasheed, marched on to their third successive win in the Arab Clubs' championship when they beat Itehad of Saundi Arabia 1-0 in the final in Riyadh.

Ransheed's first success came in 1985 when they beat Al-Harash of Algeria in Baghdad. One year later, Rasheed beat teams of Arabi, Army, Hilal and Terji to maintain the title before thrashing aside a tough challenge from Al-Najem Al-Sahili of Tunis, Itehad and Palestine in this year's finals.

Rasheed's win meant that Iraqi Clubs had won the championship four times (Police club won the first championship in 1982).

Nine teams took part in the finals, following the last minute withdrawal of Kadhuma of Kuwait.

Group A: Rasheed, Itehad, Al-Najem Al-Sahili and Palestine.

Group B: Milal of Saundi Arabia (hosts), Army club, Tersana, Arabi and former African champions Tizzy Ozzo.

RESULTS:

GROUP A:
Rasheed v Al-Najem Al-Sahili 5-1
Itehad v Al-Najem Al-Sahili 4-2
Rasheed v Palestine 5-0
Al-Najem Al-Sahili v Palestine 2-2
Itehad v Palestine 2-0
Rasheed v Itehad 3-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rasheed	3	3	0	0	13	2	6
Itehad	3	2	0	1	7	5	4
Palestine	3	0	1	2	2	9	1
Al-Najem	3	0	1	2	5	11	1

GROUP B:
Hilal v Arabi 1-0
Tersana v Army 1-0
Tizzy Ozzo v Hilal 1-0
Tersana v Arabi 3-1
Army v Arabi 3-0
Tersana v Hilal 0-0
Hilal v Army 1-0
Tersana v Tizzy Ozzo 0-0
Tizzy Ozzo v Arabi 0-0
Tizzy Ozzo v Army 1-0

IRAQ

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tersana	4	2	2	0	4	1	6
Tizzy Ozzo	4	2	2	0	2	0	6
Hilal	4	2	1	1	2	1	5
Army	4	1	0	3	3	3	2
Arabi	4	0	1	3	1	7	1

SEMI-FINALS
Rasheed v Tizzy Ozzo 4-0
Itehad v Tersana 1-0

PLAY-OFF (for third place)
Tizzy Ozzo v Tersana 2-1

FINAL
Rasheed v Itehad 2-1 (After Extra Time)

Top scorer: Haris Mohamed of Rasheed, 7 goals.

MOHAMMEDAN CUP WIN

MOHAMMEDAN SPORTING, the 1986 Dhaka League champions, defeated Dhaka Wanderers 1-0 in the final of the Bangladash Federation Cup.

While Mohammedan Sporting were seeded directly into the eight-team second round, Wanderers had to battle through the preliminary round where they defeated Victoria SC (2-1) and Wari Club (2-0).

Other preliminary round qualifiers were Arambagh KS, Sadharan Bima KS and Dhanmondi Club.

Placed in Group A of the second round, Wanderers opened with a scoreless draw with Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation.

After beating Sadharan Bima 2-0 in the second game, Wanderers needed only a draw against reigning champions Abahani Krira, shock losers to BRTC, to reach the semi-finals.

Abahani were the better team throughout the 90 minutes, but theWanderers' defence held firm and the game ended goaless.

In Group B, Mohammedan Sporting were making hard work of it and, after losing 1-0 to Brothers' Union and drawing 1-1 with Dhanmondi Club, they had to win their last match against modest Arambagh to progress to the last four.

A 2-0 victory earned the league champions second place in the group.

Mohammedan Sporting easily accounted for BRTC 3-1 in their semi-final, but Wanderers had a hard tussle with Brothers' Union before gaining victory with the only goal of the match.

Wanderers were aiming to pick up their first domestic honour for over a quarter of a century, but their hopes were dashed as Mohammedan Sporting were far too good in the final and ran out 1-0 winners.

PRELIMINARY ROUND

Group 1: Dhaka Wanderers v Victoria Sporting 2-1; Dhaka Wanderers v Wari Club 2-0.
Qualifier: Dhaka Wanderers

Group 2: Arambagh KS v East End Club 2-0; BPWD v Rahmatganj MFS 3-0; Arambagh v BPWD 0-0, 0-0 (Arambagh won 8-7 on penalties).
Qualifier: Arambagh KS

Group 3: Muktijodha Sangshad v Chalantika KC 0-0, 0-0 (4-3 on penalties); Sadharan Bima v Adamjee SCC 1-0; Muktijodha Sangshad v Sadharan Bima 0-0, 0-1.
Qualifier: Sadharan Bima

Group 4: Farashganj v Jagrata Sangha w/o; Dhanmondi Club v Farashganj 2-0.
Qualifier: Dhanmondi Club

SECOND ROUND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
BRTC	3	2	1	0	4	2	5
Dhaka Wanderers	3	1	2	0	2	0	4
Abahani KC	3	1	1	1	4	2	3
Sadharan Bima	3	0	0	3	1	7	0

Group B: Brothers Union v Mohammedan Sporting 1-0; Arambagh v Dhanmondi Club 2-0; Brothers Union v Arambagh 2-0; Moahammedan Sporting v Dhanmondi Club 1-1; Brothers Union v Dhanmondi Club 3-0; Mohammedan Sporting v Arambagh 2-0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brothers Union	3	3	0	0	6	0	6
Mohammedan Sporting	3	1	1	1	3	2	3
Arambagh	3	1	0	2	2	4	2
Dhanmondi Club	3	0	1	2	1	6	1

SEMI-FINALS: Mohammedan Sporting v BRTC 3-1; Brothers Union v Dhaka Wanderers 0-1.
FINAL: Mohammedan Sporting v Dhaka Wanderers 1-0.

Group A: BRTC v Dhaka Wanderers 0-0; Abahani Krira Chakra v Sadharan Bima 3-0; BRTC v Abaani KC 2-1: Dhaka Wanderers v Sadharan Bima 2-0 BRTC v Sadharan Bima 2-1; Dhaka Wanderers v Abahani KC 0-0.

PETER BURNS

AUSSIE SEASON EARLY FINISH

THE 1988 season kicked-off on 23 January with the first rounds of the National Cup.

The early start is to allow time for a mid-season break to accomodate the Bicentennial Cup and the final rounds of the Olympic Games; should the Aussies qualify.

Many suspect that the subsequent early finish to the league will also suit a switch to a summer season for 1988-89; a change strongly favoured by National Soccer League executive director Stefan Kamasz.

Mr Kamasz believes that summer soccer will bring back the crowds and improve Australia's international performances. With the Australian and European off-seasons coinciding, the ever-increasing number of Australian players now operating with overseas clubs would be available for international fixtures during the break.

In this past off-season, the transfer market has been hectic as usual. However, perhaps the greatest coup was not the signing of a player, but Footscray's capture of Mirsad Fazlagic, half of the coaching team that led Yugoslavia to victory in the Chile World Youth Championship. He replaces Drago Sekularac, who has returned to Yugoslavia after two seasons with the club.

Another famous name, Roberto Vieri, has been replaced as coach of Italian club Marconi after a disagreement with the management. His place has been taken by former player Bertie Mariani.

Relegated Heidelberg United naturally suffered the biggest exodus of players. Internationals Olver and Hunter joined Melbourne Croatia respectively, and defenders Marley and McKinna joined Brunswick and APIA.

Champions APIA further strenghtened their squad with the acquisition of former Youth international Kurt Reynolds from Blacktown, while Syndey Olympic signed two New Zealand internationals, goalkeeper Clint Gosling and defender, and Kiwi captain, Malcolm Dunford.

Chris Kalantzis, Lou Hristodoulou (both to Panathinaikos) and Frank Farina (to Roda JC) continued the "brawn-drain" to overseas clubs, but there was one reversal of the trend with Mike Petersen's return from Ajax Amsterdam to Brunswick Juventus.

Reigning champions APIA are quiet favourites to make it two-in-a-row this year, while their strongest challengers are expected to be the Sydney trio of St George, Croatia and Marconi.

Melbourne Croatia have made a couple of major signings and could be the season's big improver. Preston Makedonia, runners-up in 1987, have retained all their players for this season, but it is hard to see this team of honest battlers repeating last year's performance.

Sunshine George-Cross and newcomers Brisbane Lions and Wollongong City should fight out the relegation battle between them.

Meanwhile, in the National Cup first round, a goal from Bozinovski and abrace from Crino saw Footscray 3-2 winners over Preston; Brian and Smith their scorers.

In the other games Brunswick Juventus overcame Melbourne Croatia 1-0 with a goal from Lewis. Sunshine-George Cross were beaten 0-2 in Adelaide with Juventus-new signings Maxwell and Sorensen doing the scoring.

Cup holders Olympic, with former national striking pair Kosmina and Soper getting the goals, defeated St George 2-1 after extra time and APIA's Butler and Parison hit the net to cancel out De Jong's goal and earn a victory over Marconi.

The round's biggest scoreline came in the match between the two promoted clubs. Former Scottish international Alan Brazil scored a penalty for Wollongong City, but, although Crainie and Cokely added two more, they could not stop the club going out at the hands of Brisbane Lions. Lightbrown (2), Stewart, Cummings, and Druery gave the Queensland club a 5-3 victory in extra time.

South Melbourne Hellas and Sydney Croatia were exempt from the first round.

INDIA ON TOP

INDIA have emerged victorious again in the third running of the South Asian Federation Games, held in Calcutta.

Winners when the tournament last took place in 1985, India eventually showed their class after some early indifferent form.

Six teams contested the Games: India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Pakistan and Maldives. Two groups of three teams played on a league basis and the two group winners met in the final.

The first day of competition produced very little to cheer about. India were held to a goaless draw by Pakistan, and Nepal defeated Bangladesh by the only goal of the match.

Although coached by West German globe-trotter Burkhardt Ziese and looking the fitter of the two teams, Pakistan owed their "success" to their defensive attitude and the inept shooting of the Indian forwards.

Following the previous encounter, Nepal and Bangladesh gave the crowd an entertaining match with the Nepalese holding the edge throughout. Mani Shah laid on a pass for Nepalese captain Ganesh Thapa to score the only goal midway through the second half.

The following day, Bangladesh regained some pride by beating Bhutan 3-0 — with goals from Badal Das, Kaiser Hamid, and Ahmed Ali — but Pakistan effectively put themselves out of final contentions by defeating Maldives only 1-0, although the goal was a brilliant second half effort by Sharafat Ali.

Thrashed

If goals were few and far between on the first two days, the floodgates opened on the third. India thrashed Maldives 5-0, and Nepal, hammered Bhutan 6-2.

India were five goals up by half time and, although keeping control of the match throughout, failed to convert any of their chances in the second half.

Nepal joined India in the final when they scored three goals in each half to demolish Bhutan. However, their task was made easier by the poor form of Bhutan keeper Tenzie Dukpa.

In the match for the bronze medal Pakistan defied all the odds, and the run of play, to score with six minutes to go and earn their first major footballing honour.

The final turned out to be a very one-sided affair, with India in command for most of the match. After a goaless first half, the crowd became restless as Nepal produced a brief good spell midway through the second period. India saved themselves from embarassment when Mohammed Fareed latched onto a Vijay Kumar pass and belted it into the net.

FINAL (Salt Lake Stadium, Calcutta. Att:80,000)
India v Nepal 1-0
India: Debashis Mukherjee, Adul Majid, Amit Bhadra, Tarun Dey, Deepak Kumar, Satyajit Chatterjee, Krishanu Dey, Mohammed Fareed, Babu Mani, Sishir Ghosh (Vijay Kumar 65), Uttam Mukherjee.Nepal: Ranjit Kar, D.Pradhan, R.Shakya, S.R. Ranjit Kar, G. Pandey, J. Lama, Y.B. Ghale (K.Manandhar), K.Thapa, M.B.Malla, M.Shah, Ganesh Thapa.
LEADING SCORER: Ganesh Thapa (Nepal) — 5 goals.
PREVIOUS WINNERS: 1984 Nepal; 1985 India.

RESULTS

GROUP A: India v Pakistan 0-0; Pakistan v Maldives 1-0; India v Maldives 5-0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
India	2	1	1	0	5	0	3
Pakistan	2	1	1	0	1	0	3
Maldives	2	0	0	2	0	6	0

GROUP B: Nepal v Bangladesh 1-0; Bangladesh v Bhutan 3-0; Nepal v Bhutan 6-2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nepal	2	2	0	0	7	3	4
Bangladesh	2	1	0	1	3	1	2
Bhutan	2	0	0	2	2	9	0

THIRD PLACE MATCH: Pakistan v Bangladesh 1-0

OHANA GROWS IN STATURE

ISRAEL

THE fortunes of the Israeli national side may be very up and down at the moment but for their soccer exports to Europe things have never seemed better. And one player in particular, Israeli international striker Eli Ohana, appears to be growing in footballing stature all the time.

Ohana, 24, joined the Belgian club, Mechelen, last summer for £150,000. During the short time since he has arrived Ohana has certainly made an impact, with a knack of scoring goals in the important matches.

In the first round of the Belgian Cup Ohana produced a hat-trick against Brechem Sport and ensured that Mechelen won the game 3-2.

A week later he scored two vital goals against Scottish team, St Mirren, to help Mechelen move into the third round of the Cup-winners' Cup, for the first time in their history.

Then Ohana scored twice in the second round of the Belgian Cup against Club Brugge. The vital game took place at Brugge, and Mechelen, thanks to Ohana's goals, won 2-1. The decisive goal coming as late as the 90th minute.

However, it wasn't always so easy for Ohana. In earlier games for Mechelen he missed good chances and it was only the faith of manager, Add de Mos, which kept him in the side.

Now the Belgian newspapers rate him one of the best forwards in Belgian football and Ohana is a hero back in Israel. A former winner of the Israeli "Footballer of the Year" award, it was his goals which won the Israeli championship for Beitar Jersalem and attracted the attention of the bigger European clubs.

In fact, the only cloud on the horizon is the bad recent form of the Israeli national side. Meanwhile Israeli team coach, Milienko Mihic has to struggle on, often without a complete squad, as his footballing exiles are tied to their club sides.

A trying time for Israel is coming up during the next few weeks when they play for Olympic qualification. Israel are in the Oceania group and will have to travel to Australia and New Zealand for these important matches. It remains to be seen whether Israel's star players will be released by their European clubs for these matches.

INTERNATIONAL RESULTS... INTERNATIONAL RESULTS..

TUESDAY, JANUARY 12
Las Palmas — Torneo de Maspalomas, semi-final
Czechoslovakia 0
Finland 2 (Patelainen 11 pen, Alatensio 88)
HT: 0–1. **Att:** 1,500. **Ref:** Merino Gonzalez (Sp).

Czechoslovakia: Miklosko — Bielik, Straka (Griga 83), Chovanec, Fieber (Siva 61), Hyravy (Bilek 46), Hasek, Moravcik, Kubik, Skuhravy, Knoflicek.

Finland: Laukkanen — Holmgren, Pekonen, Europaeus, Petaja, Myyry, Lipponen, Törnvall (Lius 80), Tauriainen (Alatensio 57), Rantanen (Valvee 27), Patelainen.

THE Maspalomas tournament in Las Palmas is becoming a permanent, valuable fixture for eastern European teams seeking to escape the midwinter freeze and for Scandinavian sides seeking preparation for the new season. This first match in the fifth tournament provided a surprise victory for Finland. It was deserved, too. They were quicker and neater, with the much-tried-out Mika Lipponen their most creative player. Finland went ahead with a Patelainen penalty aftery Myyry was pulled down. Then, two minutes from time and with the Czechs pressing hard for an equaliser, the Finns broke away. It took a foul to halt their attack but substitute Alatensio shot home the free kick.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13
Las Palmas — Torneo de Maspalomas, semi-final
Sweden 4 (Truedesson 12, Thern 54, 77, Rehn 58)
East Germany 1 (Thom 42)
HT: 1–1. **Att:** 2,000.

Sweden: L. Eriksson — Vaatovaara, A. Ravelli, Ljung (Eklund 77), Schiller, Thern, Rehn, Engkvist (Lenn 71), Limpar, Truedsson (Hellstrom 84), Eskilsson (U. Eriksson 71).

E. Germany: Müller — Stahmann — Kreer, Schössler, Döschner — Stübner (Pilz 46), Steinmann (Sammer 46), Ernst — Kirsten, Doll, Thom.

ANDERS Limpar, subject of several English League trial offers, was the star as a much-weakened Sweden still pulled clear to win easily in the second half. East German reports later referred to this game as an 'unofficial' international, so statisticians may omit team details from records. However there seems no real reason to ignore the fact that this was a match between nations. As with a tour to South America some years back, the suspicion remains that the East Germans would not have downgraded the event so readily, had their results been better.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 15
Las Palmas — Torneo de Maspalomas, third place match
Czechoslovakia 1 (Hasek 2)
East Germany 0
HT: 1–0. **Att:** 2,000.

Czechoslovakia: Stejskal — Chovanec — Bilek, Kadlec, Hasek — Vlk, Kubek (Bielek 65), Hyravy, Danek (Skuhravy 89) — Moravcik, Griga (Knoflicek 65).

East Germany: Rudwaleit — Zötzsche — Kreer, Rohde, Schössler — Raab, Liebers, Sammer — Kirsten (Stübner 77), Ernst, Thom (Doll 13).

A CHAPTER of accidents for East Germany. If it were not enough that 1974 World Cup star Jürgen Sparwasser had made big news by escaping to the west, his national team successors conceded a second-minute goal and lost new skipper Andreas Thom to injury after only 13 unlucky minutes. Fullback Hasek, the newly-crowned Czechoslovak Footballer of the Year, scored the decisive goal from what appeared an offside position.

Las Palmas — Torneo de Maspalomas, final
Sweden 1 (Thern 30)
Finland 0
HT: 1–0. **Att:** 2,500.

Sweden: T. Ravelli — Schiller (Kindlund 46), Lonn, A. Ravelli, Ljung, Eriksson, Engqvist, Thern, Limpar, Eskilsson (Eklund 80), Triedsson (Hellstrom 46).

Finland: Hutunen — Hannikainen, Pekonen, Europaeus, Petaja, Suonen (Tauriainen), Rinne (Valvee 46), Törnvall (Alatensio 75), Myyry (Makela 46), Lius, *Rantanen. *Rantanen senf off.

SWEDEN dominated the first half and then allowed the Finns to battle back into contention in the second half. The only goal was the Swedes' deserved reward for their early endeavours, with Jonas Thern turning on the ball to surprise Huttunen with a low, left-foot shot.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 19
Tel-Aviv — intl friendly
Israel 2 (Malmilian 58, Tikva 69)
Belgium 3 (Degrijse 16, Van der Linden 20, Grun 48)
HT: 0–2. **Att:** 7,000. **Ref:** Ostak (Hun).

Israel: Hadad — Avraham Cohen, Klinger, Avi Cohen, N. Cohen, Parcelani, Ivanir, Malmilian, Ovadia (Tikva 58) — Brailovsky, Rosenthal.

Belgium: Preud-homme — Grun, Clijsters, Mommens, Dekenne (Emmerlechts 46) — Emers, Van der Elst, Creve (Severeyns 64) — Degrijse, Van der Linden, Ceulemans.

AN opening full international of the year for an Israeli team facing awkward hurdles ahead, such as France and England. The 3-2 defeat margin flattered them however. Belgium eased up once they have established a two-goal lead inside the first 20 minutes, thanks to goals from Degrijse and from the controversial (for problems off the pitch) Van der Linden.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27
Valencia — intl friendly
Spain 0
East Germany 0
Att: 20,000. **Ref:** Girard (Fr).

Spain: Zubizarreta (Buyo 46) — Chendo (Quique 46), Sanchis, Goicoechea, Lopez Recarte — Michel (Luis Garcia 73), Victor, Señor (Martin Vazquez 46), Julio Alberto (Carrasco 46) — Baquero, Julio Salinas.

E. Germany: Müller — Schlösser, Stahmann, Kreer, Döschner, Ernst (Stübner 56), Rabb (Rohde 59), Liebers, Kirsten, Sammer, Doll (Pilz 85).

SPAIN played some skilful football but failed to force the victory which would have got their European championship preparations off to an ideal start. Nevertheless, watching Irish Republic manager Jackie Charlton was impressed. He said: "Spain will have to be watched closely in the European finals. They are a good side with the sort of individual skills which can turn a game. They were a pleasure to watch." East Germany might have opened the scoring in the first few minutes when a shot from Thomas Doll grazed a post. Spain then took control. In the 27th minute new fullback Lopez Recarte, from Real Sociedad, burst through on the left only to be foiled by East German captain and goalkeeper, Rene Müller. Four minutes later Baquero, also from Real Sociedad, got the ball in the net but the 'goal' was disallowed for offside. Julio Salinas also claimed a goal in the 52nd minute but this one was ruled out for handball against the striker, deputising for the injured Butragueño. Defender Sanchis moved forward to try his luck in the 64th minute but his reader was brilliantly saved by Müller.

Tel-Aviv — intl friendly
Israel 1 (Avi Cohen)
France 1 (Stopyra 60)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Gunn (Eng).

Israel: Hadad (Fabian 61) — Avi Cohen — Avraham Cohen, Alon, Hillel — Klinger, Ivanir, Malmilian, Tikva (Eisenberg 89) — Brailovsky, Rosenthal.

France: Martini — Boli — Ayache, Le Roux, Amoros — Toure (Ferreri 78), Poullain, Fernandez (Despeyroux 72), Passi — Cantona, Bellone (Stopyra 60).

FRENCH national manager Henri Michel took advantage of the mid-winter break to snatch a training session with his squad which included a trip to Israel for this friendly. Michel caused some controversy with his decision to include only one player, fullback Manuel Amoros, from league leaders Monaco in the party. The French duly lacked cohesion and took the lead only after an hour through Yannick Stopyra — whose father, Julien, was in the team the last time a French side played in Israel 31 years ago. Rangers' Avi Cohen equalised six minutes later.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2
Toulouse — 'Tournoi France 88' semi-final
France 2 (Passi 7, Fargeon 9)
Switzerland 1 (Beat Sutter 19)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 10,348 (plus 12,000 schoolchildren free). **Ref:** Biguet (Fr).

France: Martini — Ayache (Ayache 66), Boli, Kastendeuch, Amoros — Ferreri (Bijotat 80), Poullain, Despeyroux, Passi — Stopyra (Papin 71), Fargeon.

Switzerland: Brunner — Marini, Weber, Geiger, Schällibaum — Koller (Piffaretti 77), Hermann, Bickel — Beat Sutter, Zwicker (Zuffi 65), Bonvin.

FRANCE won their first match in nine months with a lively display far removed from the tired performance in Israel. They had an ideal start. In only the seventh minute Passi volleyed home with his left-foot a cross from Ayache. Then, just two minutes later, Kastendeuch exchanged passes with Ferreri before picking out Fargeon, who also scored with a left-foot shot. At the other end Martini was beaten when the French defensive cover failed and Beat Sutter was unchallenged to head home. France deserved their victory but it was only thanks to a couple of brave stops by Martini in the last few minutes — from Bickel and Sutter — than they maintained their advantage.

Toulouse — 'Tournoi France 88' semi-final
Morocco 3 (Lakhabi 55, El Kharef 59 and 65 pen)
Austria 1 (Ogris 32)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Bouillet (Fr)

Morocco: Azmi — Hirs, Oudani, Jilal, Jabrane — Dolmy, Benabicha, Khairi (Lakhabi 46), El Kharef (Haidamou 83) — Nader (Hamraoui 65), Kiddi.

Austria: Lindenberger — Kern, Pecl, Weber, Brauneder, Zsak — Schöttel (Niederbacher 75), Werner, Willfurth — Ogris (Marko 59), Polster.

JOSEF Hickersberger began his reign as Austria boss with this defeat. The way Morocco hit back to win after being a goal behind at the interval may have made Hickersberger wonder whether he had been right to pension off the veteran, long-serving sweeper, Bruno Pezzey.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3
Haifa — intl friendly
Israel 0
Rumania 2 (Bölöni 13, Ciuca 71)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 5,000.

A second defeat in three games for Israel after a match in which Rumania, for whom Marcel Coras made his international comeback, never looked in danger.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 5
Monaco — 'Tournoi France 88' third place match
Switzerland 2 (Koller 23, Sutter 66)
Austria 1 (Geiger og 48)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 6,000. **Ref:** Girard (Fr).

Switzerland: Brunner — Marini, Andermatt, Geiger, Schällibaum — Koller, Hermann, Bickel (Weber 67) — Bonvin, Turkyilmaz (Zwicker 85), Sutter (Zuffi 82).

Austria: Wohlfarth — Artner (Frind 70), Pecl, Weber (Zsak 46), Brauneder — Kern, Schoettel, Werner (Stöger 46), Willfurth — Ogris (Marko 61), Niederbacher.

SWITZERLAND dominated the match and Austria were flattered by such a narrow margin of defeat. The Swiss went ahead in the 23rd minute. Turkyilmaz was brought down just outside the penalty area and when Wohlfarth could only parry Hermann's free kick, Koller was there to score. Geiger lucklessly provided the Austrians with an equaliser early in the second half, deflecting a cross-shot from Niederbacher. But Austria never looked like hanging on and a superb volley from Sutter to a cross by Turkyilmaz finished them off.

Monaco — 'Tournoi France 88' final
France 2 (Lamriss og 9, Stopyra 49)
Morocco 1 (Lamriss 34)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** (including free students). **Ref:** Vautrot (Fr.)

France: Martini — Casoni, Kastendeuch, Boli (Le Roux 75), Amoros — Passi, Poullain (Fernandez 52), Bijotat, Ferreri — Fargeon, Stopyra.

Morocco: Azmi — Hirs, Jilal, Oudjani, Lamriss (Bouselham 76) — Dolmy, Benabocha, Lacchabi, El Kharef — Nader (Haidamou 68), Kiddi.

FRANCE duly won their own tournament but they made hard work of it. It took an own goal from Lamriss — deflecting a Stopyra header — and a direct header from the centre-forward to bring victory. Inbetween the Moroccans replied with a goal from Lamriss (at the right end!) after a defensive blunder by Boli, who misjudged a cross from Kiddi. However the French victory was overshadowed by a very public row between Paris midfielder Luis Fernandez and national manager Henri Michel. Fernandez did not appreciate being omitted from the team for the tournament and threatened to walk out on the squad. Federation president Jean Fournet-Fayard stepped in with orders to Fernandez not to rock the boat.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10
Tel-Aviv — intl friendly
Israel 1 (Rosenthal 35)
Poland 3 (Kubicki 44, Prusik 46, Kosecki 89)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 6,000. **Ref:** Lartiego (Fr).

Israel: Ginsburg — Avraham Cohen, E. Cohen (Levin 81), Klinger — Parselami, Alon, Drieks (Tikva 46), Malmilian, Hillel (Ivanir 57) — Brailowsky, Rosenthal.

Poland: Jankowski — Kubicki, Lukasik, Wencleski, Wdowczyk — Tarasiewicz, Prusiek, Urban, Cisek (Kaczmarek 46), Marciniak (Brzoza 75), Cyron (Kosecki 46).

ISRAEL had been busy — losing 3-2 to Belgium, drawing 1-1 with france, losing 2-0 to Rumania and now losing to Poland in their penultimate test before the awkward Olympic qualifying series in Australia and New Zealand. Ronnie Rosenthal, who plays his club football in Belgium for Brugge, put Israel ahead in the 35th minute but Dariusz Kubicki equalised right on the interval. Waldemar Prusik caught the Israeli defence asleep at the start of the second half and Dariusz Kosecki wrapped up the Poles' success in the last minute of the match.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17
Athens — intl friendly
Greece 3 (Manolas 62, 79, Mitropulos 89)
N. Ireland 2 (Clarke 32 and 76)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 5,000.

Greece: Minou (Gitsoudis 46) — Apostolakis, Kolomitrousis, Manolas, Mihou (Mavridis 46), Karapialis, Saravakos, Skartados (Nioblias 46), Dimnitriadis (Borbokis 66), Mitropulos. Kofidis (Tsalouhides 46).

N. Ireland: McKnight — Fleming, Rogan, McClelland, Donaghy, McNally (K. Wilson 77), D. Wilson, Michael O'Neill (Campbell 46), Clarke, Quinn, Worthington.

NORTHERN IRELAND, ahead 1-0 at half time and later by 2-1, were overtaken in the last minute in the Athens Olympic stadium. Greece had started brightly. But they wasted their chances — Dimitris Saravokos was the leading culprit, with wasteful shots when well placed in the 16th and 34th minutes. Just before the second miss the Greeks were punished when Colin Clarke headed home a McNally cross from the right. Greece did not equalise until the 62nd minute when Stelios Manolas converted a pass from Stratos Apostolakis. Then the Irish went back ahead in the 76th minute after Manolas brought down Quinn. Substitute keeper Yannis Gitsoudis blocked Clarke's spot kick but the Southampton striker followed up to convert the rebound. There was further penalty confusion in the 79th minute when Greece equalised again. Borbokis was brought down and though McKnight stopped a Saravakos penalty, Manolas shot home the loose ball. It was then with one minute remaining Tasos Mitropulos shot the winner.

Tel-Aviv — intl friendly
Israel 0
England 0
Att: 5,000. **Ref:** Constantin (Bel)

Israel: Ginsburg — Avraham Cohen, E. Cohen, Klinger, Avi Cohen, Shimonov, Alon, Malmilian, Drieks (Eizenberg 89), Ivanir (Ovadia 87), Tikva (Brailowsky 46).

England: Woods — Stevens, Pearce, Webb, Watson, Wright (Fenwick 74), C. Allen (Harford 67), McMahon, Beardsley, Barnes, Waddle.

AN awful match. But everything had gone wrong. First England lost skipper Bryan Robson to yet another injury in training, two days before the game. The match itself was played on a waterlogged pitch, England were seriously weakened by club calls and Boni Ginsburg was at his best in the Israeli goal. Manager Bobby Robson said: On a pitch like this you needed to swim, not play football." The Israelis were satisfied, however, with their last outing before their Olympic qualifying series against their Oceania rivals. John Barnes came closest for England when he hit the bar just before half-time. Israel's best chance was down to the Argentine-born winger, Daniel Brailowsky, who chipped over the advancing Chris Woods but over the bar as well. Israel had not won in 12 matches but then — they had not secured any goalless draws before this one either.

Riyadh — intl friendly
Saudi Arabia 2 (Jaze 16, Majid 71)
Scotland 2 (Johnston 47, Collins 49)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Al-Nasir (SAr)

S. Arabia: Abdullah Al-Diaye — Saleb Al-Nuameh, Ahmed Jamil, Mohammed Abdul Jawad, Zaki Saleh, Bassim Abu Daud, Khalid Said, Hathal Al-Dawseri, Majid Abdullah, Youssef Jaze', Fahd Al-Harifi.

Scotland: Leighton (Henry Smith) — Clark, Malpas, Aitken, Gough, Miller (McLeish), Nicol (Colquhoun), McStay (Mackay), Johnston, McAvennie (Connor), Collins.

SCOTLAND'S defence looked jet-lagged. Jaze opened the scoring with a 'free' header after Leighton had tipped a shot of his for a corner and the Saudis deserved the lead they held to the interval. After the restart Scotland hit back. First Mo Johnston, looking suspiciously offside, headed home a McStay centre, then newcomer John Collins shot home a free kick after he had been brought down on the edge of the penalty area. The Scots gifted the Saudis' their equaliser 19 minutes from time. The ball was chipped forward, Majid knocked it past substitute keeper Henry Smith, and then Malpas appeared to misjudge the pace of the ball as he ran back trying to clear. The ball rolled into the net.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20
Bari — intl friendly
Italy 4 (Baresi 7 pen, Vialli 30, 35, Bergomi 87)
Soviet Union 1 (Litovchenko 18)
HT: 3-1. **Att:** 35,000.

Italy: Zenga — Bergomi, Francini, F. Baresi, Ferri, De Agostini, Donadoni, De Napoli, Mancini, Giannini, Vialli (Rizzitelli 46).

Soviet Union: Dassayev — Khidiatulin, Bessonov, Baltacha, Demianenko, Gotsmanov (Rats 61), Aleinikov, Yakovenko (Passulko 46), Litovchenko, Protasov (Belanov 46), Yaremchuk.

A REJUVENATED Italy struck a major blow in the first meaninful European championship warm-up. The Soviets had been working hard for two weeks at the Coverciano training centre outside Florence. But they were no match for the explosive young skills of Gianluca Vialli, carrying the weight of the Italian attacking effort in the wake of Alessandro Altobelli's latest defection from the national team. As early as the seventh minute Vialli opened up the Soviet defence. He was stopped only by the outstretched leg of goalkeeper Rinat Dassayev and Franco Baresi put Italy ahead from the penalty spot. Baresi was the culprit at the other end 11 minutes later, however. This time he brought down Oleg Protasov and when Vaghiz Khidiatulin took a short free kick, Gennadi Litovchenko shot home the equaliser. The Soviets remained on terms for only 12 minutes before Vialli took over. His first goal was superb, struck ont he run as he collected a pass from Guiseppe Giannini. Five minutes later and Vialli converted a pass from Fernando De Napoli to claim No 3 before being forced to lim out of the action at half time. To underline the switch to youth, Italy manager Azeglio Vicini brought on the 20-year-old Cesena discovery, Ruggiero Rizzitelli, as second-half substitute for Vialli. The Soviets brought on Igor Belanov but he could do nothing to disturb Italian command. Three minutes from the end Guiseppe Bergomi, at 24 one of Italy's veterans on the day, scored a fourth goal when he headed in after a Roberto Mancini free kick hit a post. Asked if he considered his team's youth a drawback, Vicini said: "It could be. But it would be better to pay that price in the European finals now if in two years' time we get it right for the World Cup."

OTHER MATCHES
Jan 15 (King's Cup/Bangkok): Denmark Olympic XI 1, Sov. Union 0l. XI 1.
Jan 25: (King's Cup/Bangkok): Final: Denmark Ol. XI 1, FC Tirol 0.
Jan 26: (Nehru Cup): Final: Bulgaria Ol. XI 3, Tatabanya 2.
Feb 26: Nice 1, Hungary 2.
Feb 28: Martigues 0, Hungary 1.

EUROPEAN UNDER-21 CHAMPIONSHIP FEBRUARY 16
Aberdeen — qtr. final, 1st leg
Scotland 0
England 1 (Porter 83)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 8,000.

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Italy 4 (Baresi 7 pen, Vialli 30, 35, Bergomi 87)
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Aberdeen — qtr. final, 1st leg
Scotland 0
England 1 (Porter 83)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 8,000.

LEAGUE TABLES ... LEAGUE TABLES ... LEAGUE TABLES ..

ARGENTINA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
N.O. Boys	23	13	6	4	42	17	32
Racing	23	10	11	2	35	19	31
San Lorenzo	23	10	10	3	28	14	30
Dep. Espanol	23	9	11	3	35	23	29
G. y Esgrima	23	8	12	3	30	22	28
Argentinos J.	23	10	7	6	33	24	27
River	23	9	8	6	27	23	26
Velez	23	9	7	7	30	27	25
Ferrocarril	23	7	11	5	21	19	25
Rosaria C.	23	7	16	6	34	26	24
Independiente	23	7	16	6	23	22	24
Dep. Armenio	23	5	12	6	20	23	22
Estudiantes	23	4	12	7	19	23	20
Platense	23	5	10	8	28	34	20
Boca	23	6	6	11	23	39	18
Instituto	23	5	7	11	21	39	
Talleres	23	3	11	8	25	38	17
Banfield	23	5	5	11	16	31	16
Racing (CBA)	23	5	5	13	16	31	15
Union	23	3	8	12	19	32	14

VENEZUELA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Maritimo	16	8	7	1	23	5	23
Pepeganda	16	8	4	4	32	18	20
Portuguesa	16	7	6	3	23	12	20
Lara	16	6	6	7	5	16	19
Zamora	16	6	6	4	17	15	18
Mineros	16	5	7	4	28	26	17
Caracas	16	7	3	6	20	18	17
ULA Merida	16	6	5	5	25	23	17
Peninsulares	15	3	8	4	9	20	14
Dep. Italia	16	4	6	6	14	18	14
Estudiantes	16	4	5	7	14	18	13
Anzoategui	16	4	5	7	19	27	13
Anzoategui	16	4	5	7	19	27	13
Tachira	15	4	4	7	23	21	12
UCV	16	1	3	12	12	38	5

N. IRELAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Glentoran	15	10	4	1	25	10	34
Coleraine	14	9	3	2	32	17	30
Linfield	15	9	3	3	29	10	29
Glenavon	16	9	2	5	21	13	29
Newry	15	8	4	3	22	21	28
Larne	14	8	2	4	19	14	26
Portadown	14	6	2	6	17	12	20
Ballymena	14	5	5	4	20	21	20
Ards	14	4	4	6	18	19	16
Crusaders	14	3	3	8	14	21	12
Cliftonville	15	2	6	7	11	24	12
Carrick	12	3	1	7	11	17	10
Bangor	15	2	6	7	11	24	12
Distillery	15	2	0	13	14	30	6

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LEAGUE TABLES

BELGIUM

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
FC Mechelen	22	16	2	4	37	18	34
Club Brugge	22	15	3	4	52	26	33
FC Antwerp	22	13	7	2	51	22	33
Waregem	22	12	4	6	40	26	28
FC Liege	22	9	10	3	34	21	28
Anderlecht	22	9	8	5	36	19	26
Charleroi	22	8	6	8	29	34	22
Standard Liege	22	8	5	9	34	32	21
Beerschot	22	8	4	10	28	28	20
Cercle Bruges	22	8	4	10	31	33	20
Sint Truiden	22	7	6	9	18	26	20
RWDM	22	6	8	8	23	27	20
Lokeren	22	6	7	9	28	29	19
AA Ghent	22	7	3	12	21	36	17
Beveren	22	5	7	10	25	25	17
FC Kortrijk	22	5	5	12	25	47	15
Winterslag	22	4	4	14	21	57	12
Racing Jet	22	4	3	15	15	42	11

FRANCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Monaca	25	14	8	3	35	15	36
Bordeaux	25	13	6	6	32	21	32
Matra Racing	25	11	10	4	30	24	32
Saint-Etienne	25	13	4	8	37	35	30
Auxerre	25	8	11	6	21	14	27
Marseille	25	11	5	9	33	28	27
Metz	25	12	2	11	30	26	26
Cannes	24	9	8	7	28	28	26
Montpellier	25	9	7	9	34	27	25
Toulon	25	8	9	8	24	17	25
Laval	25	10	5	10	30	24	25
Nantes	25	8	8	9	31	28	24
Toulouse	25	9	6	10	22	30	24
Niort	25	9	5	11	24	26	23
Lens	25	9	5	11	27	40	23
Lille	25	7	8	10	22	25	22
Nice	25	10	1	14	25	33	21
Paris Saint-Germain	24	7	4	13	22	33	18
Brest	25	5	7	13	22	37	17
Le Havre	25	4	7	14	22	40	15

GREECE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Larissa	20	12	5	3	39	17	29
OFI Crete	20	13	2	5	44	25	28
PAOK	20	12	3	5	45	18	27
AEK	20	10	7	3	36	22	27
Ethnikos	20	9	7	4	17	10	25
Panathanaikos	20	10	3	7	26	19	23
Iraklis	20	8	5	7	23	22	21
Aris	20	8	3	9	26	25	19
Panionios	20	5	7	8	20	22	17
Olympiakos	20	4	9	7	21	31	17
Panachaiki	20	7	2	11	22	34	16
Kalamaria	20	5	6	9	15	25	16
Diagoras Rhodes	20	5	5	10	27	26	15
Verria	20	5	4	11	19	45	14
Panserraikos	20	5	3	12	18	29	13
Levadiakos	20	4	5	11	23	34	13

HOLLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
PSV Eindhoven	22	19	3	0	82	18	41
Ajax Amsterdam	23	15	3	5	57	31	33
Willem II	23	11	5	7	41	30	27
FC Twente	22	10	6	6	43	31	26
VVV Venlo	22	9	8	5	28	18	26
Feyenoord Rotterdam	20	10	5	5	44	33	25
Fortuna Sittardia	22	8	9	5	39	31	25
Haarlem	22	10	4	8	28	29	24
FC Utrecht	22	6	9	7	26	38	21
Sparta Rotterdam	23	7	7	9	27	27	21
PEC Zwolle	23	7	6	10	28	44	20
Roda JC	23	7	5	11	29	35	19
FC Den Bosch	21	7	4	10	31	36	18
Volendam	23	6	6	11	25	45	18
FC Groningen	23	6	5	12	33	43	17
FC Den Haag	20	5	5	10	32	38	15
AZ Alkmaar	23	3	9	11	24	49	15
DS '79	21	1	5	15	26	66	7

MALTA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hamrun	10	5	4	1	12	4	14
Sliema	10	6	2	2	11	5	14
Zurrieq	10	4	5	1	10	6	13
Valletta	10	4	4	2	8	7	12
Floriana	10	1	5	4	5	8	7
Mosta	10	3	1	6	8	12	7
Hibernians	10	2	2	6	6	10	6

PORTUGAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Porto	22	17	5	0	53	11	39
Benfica	22	14	5	3	35	11	33
Boavista	22	10	8	4	21	14	28
Chaves	22	10	7	5	42	22	27
Belenenses	22	11	5	6	30	26	27
Sporting	22	9	8	5	30	24	26
Setubal	22	8	8	6	34	27	24
Penafiel	22	6	12	4	25	21	24
Guimaraes	22	5	7	7	35	26	23
Espinho	22	6	9	7	24	22	21
Maritimo	22	5	10	7	20	26	20
Varzim	22	5	10	7	18	25	20
Academics	22	5	9	8	20	26	19
Elvas	22	4	10	8	22	30	18
Rio Ave	22	4	9	9	20	41	17
Farense	22	5	7	10	17	32	17
Braga	22	3	11	8	20	29	17
Portimonense	22	6	3	13	23	36	15
Salgueiros	22	3	9	10	19	35	15
Covilha	22	3	4	15	19	43	10

SPAIN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Real Madrid	24	19	2	3	63	16	40
Atletico Madrid	24	15	5	4	45	19	35
Real Sociedad	23	15	3	5	41	18	33
Athletic Bilbao	24	12	7	5	36	26	31
Valladolid	24	10	7	7	21	21	27
Celta	24	10	6	8	30	25	26
Sevilla	24	10	5	9	24	29	25
Cadiz	24	9	6	9	27	34	24
Zaragoza	23	7	9	7	35	32	23
Barcelona	24	9	5	10	32	33	23
Osasuna	24	9	5	10	22	23	23
Gijon	24	9	5	10	26	33	23
Valencia	24	8	6	10	27	34	22
Espanol	24	8	4	12	28	35	20
Mallorca	24	7	5	12	28	40	19
Betis	24	7	4	13	26	32	18
Murcia	24	6	6	12	22	19	18
Las Palmas	24	7	4	13	28	43	18
Logrones	24	6	6	12	18	34	18
Sabadell	24	3	6	15	15	38	12

ENGLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Liverpool	26	20	6	0	63	12	66
Man Utd	28	15	9	4	43	27	54
Nottm For	26	14	7	5	50	24	49
Everton	26	13	7	6	38	16	46
Arsenal	27	13	6	8	39	26	45
QPR	27	12	7	8	32	30	43
Wimbledon	27	11	9	7	40	31	42
Luton	26	11	5	10	40	32	38
Sheff Wed	28	11	4	13	34	45	37
Tottenham	27	9	7	11	26	31	34
Southampton	27	8	9	10	35	39	33
Newcastle	26	8	9	9	31	38	33
West Ham	27	7	11	9	29	35	32
Chelsea	28	8	7	13	34	47	31
Norwich	28	8	6	14	26	34	30
Portsmth	28	6	12	10	27	44	30
Coventry	26	7	8	11	27	39	29
Derby Cnty	26	6	7	13	22	32	25
Oxford	27	6	7	14	32	53	25
Charlton	28	5	9	14	27	42	24
Watford	27	5	8	14	18	36	23

TURKEY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Galatasaray	23	16	5	2	52	23	53
Besiktas	23	15	8	2	42	13	47
Malatya	23	11	7	5	39	32	40
Sakarya	23	12	3	8	34	34	39
Bursa	23	11	3	9	39	36	36
Trabzon	23	10	5	8	36	29	35
Samsun	23	10	5	8	23	22	35
Fenerbahce	23	9	6	8	26	28	33
Karsiyaka	22	8	7	7	26	23	31
Eskisehir	23	7	10	6	26	24	31
Sariyer	23	6	11	6	34	32	29
Ankaragucu	23	7	8	8	31	32	29
Bolu	23	8	4	11	28	32	28
Denizli	23	7	6	10	22	28	27
Adanademir	23	8	3	12	23	38	27
Altay	22	7	5	10	34	33	26
Rize	23	7	5	11	23	38	26
Genclerbirligi	23	6	5	12	23	31	23
Kocaeli	23	3	8	12	23	40	17
Zonguldak	23	4	4	15	21	42	16

WEST GERMANY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Werder Bremen	20	14	5	1	37	9	33
Bayern Munich	20	14	1	5	46	28	29
Koln	20	11	7	2	34	16	29
Nurnberg	20	10	6	4	32	17	26
Borussia Mg	20	12	2	6	41	29	26
Stuttgart	20	9	5	6	42	28	23
Eintracht Frankfurt	20	8	3	9	33	30	19
Bayer Leverkusen	20	6	7	7	28	29	19
Hamburg	20	6	6	8	35	45	18
Hannover	20	7	3	10	30	35	17
Waldhof Mannheim	20	5	7	8	23	32	17
Kaiserslautern	20	6	4	10	30	37	16
Bochum	20	5	6	9	27	35	16
Karlsruhe	20	6	4	10	24	40	16
Borrusia Dortmund	20	5	5	10	27	32	15
Schalke 04	20	6	3	11	28	46	15
Bayer Uerdingen	20	5	3	12	26	38	13
FC Hamburg	20	3	7	10	25	42	13

SCOTLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Celtic	32	21	9	2	59	20	51
Rangers	33	21	6	6	64	22	48
Hearts	33	17	13	3	62	26	47
Aberdeen	33	16	13	4	47	21	45
Dundee	32	14	6	12	59	42	34
Dundee Utd	33	12	10	11	37	36	34
Hibernian	33	9	13	11	31	35	31
St Mirren	32	7	11	14	33	49	25
Motherwell	33	9	6	18	26	46	24
Falkirk	33	6	9	18	30	59	21
Dunfrmline	32	5	8	19	24	63	18
Morton	33	2	10	21	22	75	14

CYPRUS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
APOEL	13	9	3	1	27	11	21
AEL	12	9	3	1	29	12	19
Parallimni	13	7	5	1	23	12	19
Omonia	13	7	4	2	28	11	18
Pezoporikos	12	6	5	1	24	17	17
Apollon	12	5	6	1	23	16	16
APOP	13	4	5	4	18	19	13
EPA	12	5	2	5	14	16	12
Olympiakos	13	5	2	6	13	20	12
Anortosi	13	4	3	6	15	19	11
Salamina	13	4	2	7	13	15	10
Ethnikos	13	1	8	4	9	15	10
Aris	13	2	4	7	15	28	8
APEP	13	2	3	8	7	22	7
Aiki	13	1	4	8	9	22	6
Anagennisis	13	2	1	10	10	32	

ITALY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Napoli	19	15	3	1	42	13	33
Milan AC	19	11	6	2	29	9	28
Roma	19	9	7	3	28	14	25
Sampadoria	19	8	8	3	27	18	24
Inter	19	7	7	5	25	21	21
Torino	19	5	10	4	22	21	20
Juventus	19	7	5	7	23	19	19
Verona	19	6	7	6	19	18	19
Pescara	19	7	4	8	18	39	18
Cesena	19	5	6	8	13	20	16
Fiorentina	19	4	7	8	16	21	15
Ascoli	19	4	6	9	22	28	14
Pisa	19	4	6	9	17	24	14
Como	19	3	7	9	14	29	13
Avellino	19	2	7	10	12	31	11
Empoli*	19	3	8	8	12	23	

* Empoli — 5 points.

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	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dundalk	23	15	4	4	41	22	34
St. Patrick's	24	13	6	5	40	19	32
Bohemians	23	12	7	4	43	25	31
Shamrock	24	12	7	5	42	22	31
Galway	24	10	7	7	32	27	27
Waterford	23	8	10	5	33	20	26
Cork	23	9	7	7	31	38	25
Derry	24	10	4	10	43	29	24
Shelbourne	24	6	4	14	21	31	16
Limerick	23	5	5	13	18	46	15
Bray	24	2	8	14	17	48	12
Sligo	24	4	3	17	25	58	11

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FOOTBALL FAN, 20, would like pen pals from around the world who would like to exchange programmes. Hobbies include soccer, reading, listening to music and sports. Write to: Baboucarr Jarju, National Vocational Training Centre, Half Die, Banjul, The Gambia.

FOOTBALL FAN, male, 23, would like to correspond with female pen pals from around world, preferably in American, Europe or Russia. Write to: Zainudin Jahidin, I/A/BN 16, Kepayan, 88200 Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia.

HUNGARIAN BOY, 16, would like to correspond with football souvenir collectors from around the world. Favourite teams include Bayern Munich, Real Madrid and Manchester United. Write in English to: Nagy Robert, Oroshara 5900, Liget u. U, 2/8, Hungary.

ZAMBIAN, male, 20, wants pen pals from the

following countries: England, France, Belgium, Denmark, Africa and America. Hobbies include: playing football, collecting colour posters and team pictures of all national teams. All letters answered. Write to: John Inpundo Chibuye, 13 Zambezi Street, Kabwe, Zambia.

SOCCER FAN, 19, wishes to correspond with friends anywhere. All letters answered. Write to: Thomas NG, 4/F, Block G, 148 Johnston Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.

MOROCCAN STUDENT, 24, would like pen pals from around the world, likes football and music. All letters answered. Write to: N. Lnal Aboelkaoel, Derb Elfaukala, Rue 15, No 17, Casablanca 06, Morocco.

INDIAN, male, 26, wants male and female pen pals worldwide. Hobbies are soccer, tennis, cricket, hockey, collecting stamps and postcards. Write to: Johnny Purty, 91/B Elliott Road, Calcutta 16, India.

WANTED

WANTED: French cup final videos (VHS), Bordeaux v Marseilles 1987, Paris St Germain v Nantes. Also posters of Jose Toure of Bordeaux and France. Mr M. Njai, 215 Graham Road, London, E8 1PE.

WANTED: Autographed photos of players worldwide (Present or old) send in exchange souvenirs from all over the world. Ivan Pinget, Fontenette 15, 1227 Carouge, Switzerland.

WANTED: Female pen pals aged 18-23 from anywhere in the world. Send photo if possible. All letters answered. Room No 405, YMCA Residence, 104 Rissik Street, Wanderers View, Johannesburg 2001 Transvaal, South Africa.

WANTED: England international team photographs/photocopies 1900-1920. Good prices paid, all letters answered. Dave Allan, 17 Pargeter Street, Stourbridge.

EXCHANGES

I AM VERY INTERESTED in exchanging metal badges from around the world, anyone interested contact: Kubaskek Zdenek, Prubezna 1853, 26901 Rakovnik, Czechoslovakia.

AUTOGRAPH SWAPS — list available, sent details of your spares to swap. Particularly want any non English players and overseas contacts for further swaps. Write to: G. Holmes, 37 Old Manor Road, Rustington, West Sussex, BN16 3QS, England.

UKRAINIAN COLLECTOR would like to exchange international programmes, pennants, badges with British and other West European collectors. Konstantin Daviskiba, Per Kovalski 22, AP 16, 252056 Kiev, USSR.

PROGRAMME COLLECTOR From England wishes to exchange programmes and magazines from around the world. Write to: 4 Guy Road, Wallington, Surrey, SM6 7LY.

VIDEOS money or football material for a video of Brazil 2 Chile 1, December 9th 1987. D. Woods, 161 North Hill Drive, Harold Hill, Romford, Essex, RM3 7AE, England.

WOULD LIKE TO EXCHANGE SOUVENIRS of international teams. Write to: Jose Roberto de Mello, Rua Castro Alves — 1141 Bairro x, Jaboticabal, CEP 14870, Estadio de Sao Paulo, Brazil.

BRAZILIAN BOY, 16, would like to exchange football souvenirs with people from around the world. Write to: Ivoneti Donizeti Tomiatti, Rua Prudente de Moraes, 518 Centre Taquari tinga CEP 15900, Estado de Sao Paulo, Brazil.

POLISH COLLECTOR of football badges. I have about 5000 badges from all over the world and 100 badges from England. Would like to exchange with someone from Great Britain. Andrzej Wypisinski, Traktorowa 88 m.5, 91-144 todz, Poland.

DUNDEE FC FAN would like to exchange Scottish football souvenirs for any Inter Milan souvenirs. Stephen Borland, 53 Castle Street, Brougghty Ferry, Dundee, DD5 2EJ, Scotland.

MEXICAN FOOTBALL FAN would like to exchange football souvenirs with European football fans. Can write in Spanish and read in English. Victor Fuentes, Apartado Postal 39-173, 44170 Guadalajara, Jalsicco, Mexico.

EXCHANGE VIDEOS, programmes etc, for videos of Port Vale 2 Spurs 1 and Luton 7 Oxford 4. Ola Carlsson, Vintervagen 17B, 66500 Kil, Sweden.

VHS COLLECTORS from Brazil, Mexico, Belgium, Spain, Morocco, Portugal, in return can offer English Division + Scottish premier videos. Write to: Jason Stone, 33 Balmoral Close, Billericay, Essex, CM11 2LL, England.

WILL EXCHANGE FOOTBALL souvenirs worldwide especially South America and Russia. Andy Campbell, 133 Broadoak Road, Ashton under Lyne, Lancs, England.

SOUVENIRS FOR EXCHANGE for details please send SAE to: Dean Sadler, 24 Coombe Drive, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3DA.

GERMAN STATISTICIAN exchanges regular information (Bundesliga, DDR Oberliga) with partners in Scandinavia, Belgium, Cyprus, Hungary, Iceland, Luxembourg, Malta, Soviet Union, Turkey, Yugoslavia, South America, Mexico, Australia. Adults only. Werner Siefert, Wohlerstr 12e, D-6701 Maxdorf 2, West Germany.

RED STAR FAN, also follows Chelsea wants to exchange football souvenirs with people from around the world. Write to: Ilic Sasa, 18000 NIS, Djerdapska 10, Yugoslavia.

GLASGOW CELTIC FAN, 23 wants programmes of Irish clubs in exchange for Celtic souvenirs. Also internationals, Youth, Schoolboy and Olympic, North and South. Patrick Nolan, 74 Aberdalgie Road, Easterhouse, G34 9HP, Glasgow.

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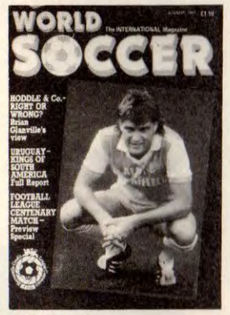

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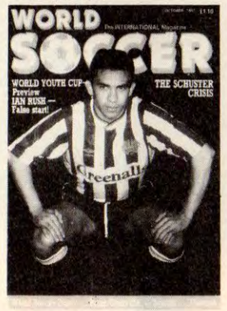

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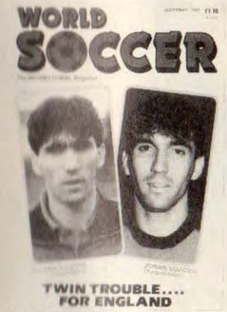

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